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BIHAR YOGA®

Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 2

Swami Satyananda Saraswati



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 2



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Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 2

Swami Satyananda Saraswati

*Satsangs given by Sri Swamiji at Rikhiapeeth, Deoghar,
during the period 2004–2009*



Yoga Publications Trust, Munger, Bihar, India

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(Swami Sivananda)

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Jhoolan

29 August 2004



We celebrate Jhoolan every year here at Rikhiapeeth in the name of Sri Krishna who, according to history, was born almost five thousand years ago on the banks of the river Yamuna at Mathura in India. *Jhoola* means swing or cradle. Just as two intimate friends sit together on a swing in the rainy season and enjoy themselves, in the same way, Radha and Krishna are placed on the jhoola or swing and devotees get a chance to swing them. Or, just as you put a baby in a cradle and swing him so he enjoys it and is happy, in the same way baby Krishna or Gopal Krishna is placed on the jhoola and everyone gets a chance to swing him. *Jhoolan* means cradle ceremony or swing ceremony.

We have been having this ceremony for the village folk since I came here. You may have seen them last night, how they come in large numbers and are full of excitement and fervour for this event. In the monsoon season, every village house in India has a jhoola in which they keep Krishna, such is their faith in this ceremony. We have two jhoolas, one for baby Krishna and the other for the young Krishna and his playmate, Radha.

This is a simple down-to-earth way to remember Sri Krishna, the greatest man ever born in India. Krishna is a historical figure, the history of this land cannot be written without mentioning him. In fact, I would say that he dominates Indian history. In the course of time, history becomes legend and historical figures become legendary figures. History becomes legend and survives only because it is transmuted into legend. The history of any land is always destroyed by invading kings, emperors, rulers and political parties. They always try to wipe out the history of the place they invade so they can rule without opposition. Therefore, history is always destroyed, mutilated and rewritten to suit the ruling party.

Legend lives on. Legend does not die because it is embedded in the hearts and minds of the simple people who do not care much for politics. Krishna has become a legend, now no one can wipe him out of our hearts. Wherever we go, we take him with us. No matter who rules, he stays with us. You will remember my words. Only the history which becomes legend lives on. History dies, but legends live. Those legends then become fantasy and dreams. This is what you saw here in Rikhia last night, a fantasy, a beautiful dream coming alive.

We have another cradle ceremony in the month of December. On the 24th, Christmas Eve, and the 25th, Christmas Day, we celebrate Christmas, the birth of Christ. So, each year Rikhia has two cradle ceremonies, one for baby Krishna in August and the other for baby Christ in December. For Krishna we have an Indian cradle and for Christ we have an Italian cradle brought from Rome. The Italian devotees brought it for the ceremony.

There are so many similarities between Krishna and Christ. Their names are similar. In parts of India, Krishna is even called Kristo, not Krishna. There is a similarity in the cradle ceremony also. The names have a similarity, the ceremonies of Jhoolan and Christmas have a similarity, but the most important similarity is that both were on the hit list. This is the greatest similarity between these two figures. Christ was on the hit list of King Herad, so he had to be taken to Egypt. Do you remember the story? Krishna was on the hit list of the King Kamsa, so he was smuggled across the river Yamuna, from Mathura to Gokul. As he could not be traced, a mandate was passed that all babies born on the day of Krishna's birth should be slain. The same dictate was passed in the case of Christ as well. There are so many similarities between the two that at times we don't know whether Christ was Krishna or Krishna was Christ.

There is a difference, however. Krishna was born five thousand years ago and Christ was born two thousand years ago. The historical timing of their birth is the only difference and, as you know, the timing by history can be illusive, as the dates given in history are not always accurate. So, when you attend this Jhoolan ceremony, you can remember both Krishna and Christ. At this time we have all the songs and kirtans on Sri Krishna, but in December we sing songs for Christ.

The important thing which I intend to tell you now is that we remember Sri Krishna for his immortal teachings in the *Bhagavad Gita*, the song of the Lord, the song celestial. In the course of time, Krishna will be remembered for many things in India, but his association with the *Bhagavad Gita* is instant and spontaneous in the minds of the Indian people.

Krishna will also be remembered in the West. The future cult in the West will be the cult of Krishna. It will take time, but it is coming. He will be remembered for many things, besides the *Gita*. He will be remembered for the unique relationship he had with Radha. He met Radha when he was nine years old and she was four years older than him. Their friendship lasted for only a short while, as after Krishna left Vrindavan

and Gokul for Mathura, he never saw her again. Yet, the love between them has been immortalized. The West is going to accept him because they like Radhas. They don't want abstinence, they don't like abstinence. They like the idea of Radha and Krishna. They say, what is the harm if God has a girlfriend? It is a great idea.

Krishna will also be remembered for music and dance in the West because it is steeped in that culture. Music and dance is an industry in the West and propagation of music is a business. He will be remembered for eve-teasing, the Western ethos likes that! Of course, in a nice, playful way and in good taste, not like the vulgar eve-teasing of Delhi and Mumbai. He will also be remembered for shrewd statesmanship, accurate diplomacy, political acumen and shrewd thinking. The Western world will admire him for that because the West has shrewd political systems.

The *Bhagavad Gita*, which is a dialogue between Krishna and his friend and disciple, Arjuna, is not a religious book. No! The *Bhagavad Gita* cannot be equated with the Koran. It cannot be equated with the Bible. It cannot be equated with the Shiva Purana. It cannot be equated with Zend-Avesta. The *Bhagavad Gita* is unique. It is a book which tells you about life, the problems of life and the techniques to handle life, because life is a relentless Mahabharata.

Life is a battleground in which a relentless war goes on day and night between two forces. Wherever you look, whether in the body, mind or spirit, family, profession, society or nation, everywhere a Mahabharata is going on. Just as there were two opposite armies facing each other in the Mahabharata war, we face the onslaught of two opposite and equal forces in life too. They rage a war within us, attacking and pulling at each other.

Life is the battleground and you are the warrior, Arjuna. The battle is taking place within you and you can emerge as victor if Krishna is on your side and you pay heed to what he is saying, especially when the tide is against you. This book tells you how to handle and manoeuvre yourself through life

skilfully, deftly, carefully and intelligently, so that life does not defeat you. It does not ask you to turn your face away from life or renounce life, not at all! Rather, the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita* show you the way to fulfilment while being actively engaged in life. It asks you to face life squarely and shows you how to steer through life, no matter what your obligations and commitments are, as father, mother, wife, husband, friend, employer, employee, sannyasin or just an ordinary human being. It tells you how, while being embroiled in life, you can achieve your goals, no matter what your station in life is. To win the war raging inside is to become successful. Success is conquest over your lower nature.

Krishna will be remembered for his eternal teachings in the *Bhagavad Gita*, a small book of eighteen chapters, seven hundred stanzas, referring to eighteen yogas. Remember, this is the book which is sold all over the world more than the Bible, the Koran or any other book. In India itself where the population is one billion, it is read in the original by everyone. Apart from that, it has been translated into every language. It is easily the first book which has sold in such great numbers, perhaps over five million copies. It is read every day by Indians. At least I read the *Bhagavad Gita* every day. I believe all of you should read it every day because it will help you. It is important to read the *Bhagavad Gita*, to understand it, to reflect on it, and to apply it in your daily life if you want to be successful.

So, we are celebrating Jhoolan in remembrance of one of the greatest figures to appear on the horizon of India. Indians don't consider Sri Krishna to be just a man, we consider him an *avatara*, an incarnation of God. We believe that God came in flesh and blood. Just as Christians believe that Christ is the son of God, Hindus believe that Krishna is God-incarnate, or God in flesh and blood. Krishna is not a man. He only comes to enact the life of a man, but He is not a man. He is neither born nor does He die.

Inauguration of Sat Chandi Mahayajna

1 December 2005



Yajna: awakening of man

Yajnas began with the awakening of man, not with the awakening of civilization. When man awakened from his deep slumber, which of course animals are unable to do, he found around him something burning, something engulfing everything, something very hot, and he realized that it was fire. Animals too have seen that for millions and trillions of

years, but they haven't yet awakened themselves to fire. Man awakened himself to fire, and that is how yajna began.

So, it can be said that the ritual of yajna began with fire and fire began with the awakening of man. Of course, fire pre-existed man. Fire is eternal. Fire is primordial. It existed before man. It existed before every living creature. It existed before creation. But man did not know what it was. It is that precise moment when he became aware of fire that yajna began. That is the first point you must remember.

Chidagni kunda sambhuta

Yajna is not a religious ritual, nor is it a symbol of history. Yajna indicates the first day when man awoke from the pit where fire was burning. The mantra is: *Chidagni kunda sambhuta*. *Chit* means consciousness, the consciousness in man, the consciousness in a dog, the consciousness in a donkey, the consciousness in everything. *Agni* means fire. *Kunda* means a vertical pit, not a horizontal cave. *Agni kunda* means fire pit. The word *sambhuta* means that which is born, it represents the feminine gender and not the masculine gender. If it was the masculine gender, the word would be *sambhutaha*. The word *sambhuta* means that which arose from the pit of fire was consciousness, and that consciousness was a female.

Knowledge of grain

The second principle in yajna is the knowledge of grain. In the beginning of creation, everyone lived naturally, and I emphasize the word 'naturally'. Living on fruits, grass, insects, meat and flesh is called natural living. They did not know grain. No, grain was there before man, but man did not know it. The day man knew that there is this thing called grain that can be grown and eaten, that was the second day of yajna. Therefore, yajna is not historical. You cannot say that it started with the vedic civilization or the Eastern civilization, no, no, no. Don't confuse yajna with religious, sectarian or political civilizations. It began with the awakening of man's consciousness. So, the second element in yajna is grain.

The mother principle

Chit is that part of consciousness in man which can see the man, which can become aware of time and space and relate man to time, space and object. A relationship between object or matter and time and space is a quality of *chit*. Not *chitta*, that is different. *Chitta* is memory, but *chit* means awareness, and you were born with that awareness. When you emerged from your mother's womb you had this awareness, but it was dormant. Gradually, this latent awareness was enhanced and the idea 'I am' dawned. At that time, the first person you related to was the mother. Whenever there is an awakening of consciousness in anything, you first relate to mother. Therefore, the third important item in *yajna* is mother.

The root *ma* represents the state of hibernation of creation. *Ma* represents the awakening, the flourishing of creation. *Ma* means creation, *Ma* means creator. At first, the child only knows its mother. Therefore, in Sanskrit the term *Ma* or *Mata* is used. In English you say the same thing and in Spanish you say *Madre*. We know that all children, no matter in which part of the world they are born, on first becoming aware see before them a lady and say, "Ma". They don't say *fa* or *ga* or *sa*, they say "Ma"!

Now, let me point out the important aspect of this ritual. *Yajna* is an external ritual and it is an internal event. The ceremony which will be performed from tomorrow is the external *yajna* in which all the elements will be presented as they are in the inner *yajna*. You will witness this outer *yajna* for the next five days. But for the inner *yajna*, you have to awaken the fire that is burning within you through the practices of yoga. It is said that at the base of the spine in *mooladhara chakra*, there is a pit or *kunda*. In that pit is a fire which has to be ignited through the practices of *pranayama* and *yoga*. That is the main aim of *yoga*, not good health, beauty, a slim body or a slim waist. I do not disagree that *yoga* and *pranayama* are good for all that, but the aim of *yoga* is to ignite the fire.

Yoga ignites the fire in the pit and that pit is called *kunda*. The word *kundalini* has been derived from the word

kunda. Kundalini does not mean coil, correct yourself, correct your books. Kundalini does not mean coil or serpent. Kundalini comes from the word kunda, which means pit. The pit is mooladhara, which lies just behind the coccyx. It is a physical entity in your body, as small as a mustard seed. Just as you have glands such as the thyroid, pituitary, thymus and pineal, similarly, you have a subatomic miniscule point called mooladhara in your body. Igniting the fire in mooladhara is the main aim of the practices of yoga that you have been doing all these years. This is the inner yajna. Unfortunately, you have not known its use and so you have misused it. Sorry, I will make a few bitter statements. You have used it for progeny and pleasure. But you have not used it for awakening.

Through yoga, you ignite the fire and the consciousness awakens. The same consciousness through which you become aware of fire and grain, the same consciousness through which a child becomes aware of its mother, that very same consciousness makes a giant awakening. You may call it the greatest experience of man. After awakening, it ascends to sahasrara and resides there for a period of time, not permanently. It stays in sahasrara for a particular period of time where it is saturated with nectar, because the seat of fire is in mooladhara and the seat of nectar is in bindu. I believe you know all this because I have said it before in my books on the kundalini. After drinking the nectar, it returns to mooladhara, and is known as the descending consciousness, not ascending but descending consciousness.

They are two different experiences of consciousness: the ascent and the descent. While it is descending, it nectarizes all your centres, your eyes, your nose, your skin, your body, your thoughts, your actions, your perception, your conception, your philosophy, the very existence of your life is nectarized.

Human destiny

The descending consciousness is the concept of Sri Aurobindo, a great yogi who lived in Pondicherry in the twentieth century.

He spoke about the descent of psychic consciousness and proclaimed that in the coming age, the psychic power will manifest. This is the destined evolution of man. It will happen, even if you don't want it.

Man's destined evolution is spiritual awareness. The evolution that is destined for us is spiritual, not sensual or sensorial awareness. Our destiny is not just to remain at the level of sexual or earthly awareness. No, the purpose of life or the destiny of man is not to run after toys. I am using the word 'toys' and you should understand what I mean by that. Today, the whole world, all men, women and children, the entire human community, is running after toys. These are the toys of ignorance. Of course, you may have them in abundance, but you still have to wake up to the fact that it is not the destiny of man to remain limited to lower awareness.

The destiny of man is realization of the spiritual awareness which is inherent in him. It is not something alien that he has to import from outside, it is embedded in him just as much as his blood, bones and marrow are embedded in him. I may not live in this body, you too may not live in this body, but you shall live in another body and you will see, as Sri Aurobindo has said, the future civilization or society will consist of people whose way of thinking will be psychic and spiritual. The future man will have transcended sensuality. He will transcend rationality and intellectualism, and arrive at a spiritual forum. The final attainment of yajna is self-realization.

Arrival in Rikhia

I came to Rikhia on 23 September 1989, at 12 o'clock, midday. It was the day of the vernal equinox when everything is in perfect balance. Day and night are both exactly twelve hours long. On such a day, I set foot here at exactly midday. Was that auspicious moment a coincidence? Swami Satsangi had come here a few weeks earlier to purchase the property. She employed an old man in the nearby village of Amarwa,

Narayana, who is no more, for the construction of the boundary walls and other buildings. Narayana was very impressed by her. He was totally illiterate, but he was a true gentleman and I still remember him.

The impulse for change

One day, he invited her to his small dilapidated hut. When she returned from there, she was in shock and trauma. She is a descendant of the five-star Western culture and did not have any exposure to rural culture or the villages of India. She had no idea of rural life. She knew the difference between a Fiat and a Ford, that she knew. And she returned in shock, in trauma.

I said, “What happened?” She said, “How can they live like that?” I said, “That is how millions of Indians live.” She said, “But there are no windows. There is only one room, and he and his wife and son and daughter and daughter-in-law and children and goats and chickens all live in the same room.” I said, “Everybody lives like that in India. Millions and millions



live like that. I know it because I also lived like that in the rural villages of Almora during my childhood. One single room is the whole world for an entire family.” She said, “No, I cannot digest this, I will make a house for him.” I said, “Nonsense. How many houses will you make? Even if you have crores of rupees, it will not suffice.”

Anyway, she did make a few houses, and then she understood what I meant when I said that it is a gigantic task. Then she began to give auto-rikshaws, rikshaws and hand-carts to the nearby villagers of Rikhia. That was a good venture, as they could earn a livelihood from that and feed their families. Then she started giving clothes and woollens to the women and children, the old and the sick. I did not accept it. I said, “If you want to make people poor and if you want them to remain poor, give them charity. Give them free food, give them free homes. Of course, your own career may rise, but they will remain destitute. Find a way out – what to do. After all, you can ignite the fire in a very small way.”

Ultimately, she surrendered to me. I said, “Look, I will tell you what to do. All these tantrums, building houses, giving clothes and thelas and rickshaws will not help anyone. They will all go into a black hole.” I think you will all agree with me that charity is the mother of poverty.

Meaningful change

Then, one day, a little girl from the nearby village of Nawadih came and said, “Swamiji, I want to learn English.” I said to Swami Satsangi, “Look here, this is your breakthrough – English.”

Swami Satsangi started with one girl and now you can see for yourself how the number has grown. There is a big demand and their parents press her daily to enrol their children to learn English. When she asked them what they wanted to learn, they did not opt for Hindi or Sanskrit, their unanimous choice was English.

Percolating prosperity

Since then, the change has taken place. There is no family in this panchayat which goes without food. There is no child in this panchayat who does not get a proper dress every one or two months. On every festival, whether it is Holi, Diwali, Dussehra, Navaratri or Guru Poornima, we give them beautiful dresses. We always have supplies ready for them.

When the children of this panchayat get five or six sets of dresses every year, what will you call them? Destitute? Lower middle class? Upper middle class? In which category do we place them? They are happy and their prosperity is percolating. Prosperity should always percolate, because that keeps a man in check. If riches come like tsunami, they completely sweep you away and you cannot control yourself.

These children have full attendance in the nearby schools now, so keen they are to learn and study. When we came here, all the schools were empty with practically no attendance. Now they are overflowing with children, and the local administration has also made a few nice classrooms for them. Study has become their interest and passion, and the proof is that a private school has opened in our panchayat where parents pay thirty rupees to have their children educated. This shows how keen they are to have their children educated. The local administration does not have to tell them to do that because they understand the value of education.

Last year, we introduced computer lessons and inducted a few kanyas who are good in English for computer training. They have learnt to operate computers so fast that some of them are now ready to teach the smaller children. And I have been promised any number of computer monitors by well-wishers. Then, what do I need? If I get one hundred or two hundred monitors, hundreds of students in this panchayat will be computer literate. As far as teachers are concerned, there is no problem, because everyone here knows computers, all these gerudharis know computers. This is the influence of spiritual life on them, this is the sign that their kundalini is awakening!

Christmas

25 December 2005



Christ was born in Bethlehem. He healed, he preached, he was crucified. Everyone knows this story. I need not tell you all this. What you need to know is the truth, which has been subjected to the biggest historical cover-ups in history. In 1947 some Bedouin shepherds were searching for a lost goat in the caves by the Dead Sea. They found jars containing ancient scrolls. They sold them to a dealer and eventually the Europeans and Americans came to know of them.

The scholars began to decipher and decode the scrolls, which are now historically known as the Dead Sea scrolls. Everyone has heard of these scrolls both in the East and the West. Many were deciphered, and it came to light that in the

first century AD, that is, about nineteen hundred years ago, there existed a *sampradaya* or sect, a group of ascetics, who lived along the Dead Sea coast like sannyasins. They were known as the Essenes.

The Essenes were a monastic sect who lived in seclusion in a monastery inhabited only by monks, not nuns. They were puritans and lived an austere life of celibacy, as they observed brahmacharya. What came to light through the scrolls is that Jesus visited these places. Jesus lived there during his early years, when he was eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, and questioned the senior monks who had been living there for decades about spiritual life. They taught him many things, but all of it was theoretical. When Christ wanted to learn the practical aspect, they said, “Young lad, for that you must go to India.”

Jesus followed the merchants who frequently travelled to India to sell their goods. In India, he visited and lived at the Hemis monastery in Ladakh. This was discovered by German and Muslim professors who visited the monastery and documented their visit. These reports are available in the market. He lived there for a long time. The monks who lived in this monastery were Buddhist. Due to his exceptional personality, they accepted Jesus as one of the incarnations of Buddha. There are rock edicts and paintings which testify this. The edicts depict all the Buddhas as seated and wearing the traditional Buddhist matted locks, except for one Buddha who is standing and has flowing hair. That was Jesus, the twenty-second Buddha. From those Buddhist monks and scholars at Hemis, Jesus learnt *dhamma*, the code of morality, virtue and spiritual duty, which is the mainstay of Buddhism. Buddhism is based on the tenets of dhamma or dharma. That is what you find in the Sermon on the Mount, too.

After Ladakh, Jesus visited Kashi, now known as Varanasi. At that time, the Shaka emperor Shalivahan presided over the throne of India. He is the same Shalivahan in whose name the Indian calendar is accepted today. You may have heard

of Shaka Samvat, the calendar followed throughout India, according to which we are in the 1,927th year since the Shaka rule. The emperor Shaka Shalivahan ascended the throne and started the calendar in his name 1,927 years ago.

The *Bhavishya Purana* has documented that the famous emperor of India, Shalivahan, who ruled 1,927 years ago, met Jesus in Kashi. Jesus introduced himself to Shalivahan as 'the Son of God'. Shalivahan also addressed him as 'Tsha Putra', which means Son of God. If you want to see this evidence, you should read the *Bhavishya Purana*, which has recorded this event in history.

The Puranas are the history of India fictionalized. *Purana* means 'once upon a time', and all our Puranas are records of a time in history. History does not remain history. It should not remain history. History becomes legend and legend turns into myth or fiction. History is and should always be fictionalized if you do not want political problems. Otherwise, Shiva, Brahma, Vishnu and Shakti will always be fighting among each other. Today, we worship Shiva, Shakti and Vishnu in the same temple. There is no bitterness and no fights because they belong to fictionalized history.

There is documentation in the *Bhavishya Purana* of Jesus Christ's visit to Kashi 1,927 years ago. If this be so, a question arises: was he born two thousand years ago? If he met Shalivahan, it can be deduced that instead of 2,000 years ago, he was born 1,950 or 1,957 years ago. That is fifty years later than it is generally stated.

The facts should be recollected historically. Why this historical cover-up? Historical cover-ups are always done with a political motive. Krishna loved Radha. Shiva married twice. Fine. A god is always a god, no matter what he does. Electricity or electrical energy is always electricity, whether it is applied to a heater or a cooler. Electricity does not become the heater or the refrigerator. Electricity does not become anything other than electricity. In the same way, God remains God, whether he goes to Radha, Gauri or Lakshmi. However, there are some people who cannot accept it.

After Kashi, Jesus visited Puri, where he took part in the Ratha Yatra of Subhadra, Balaram and Jagannath. In Puri, which was a Vaishnava stronghold and still is, he received instructions on bhakti, which is the core of Christianity today. Surrender, total surrender to God, is a tenet of Christianity and also the main focus of Vaishnavism. Bhakti or surrender to God is the foundation of Vaishnavism, which Jesus was exposed to in Puri.

Then he travelled to the Kaveri Delta in the South, which was the land of esotericism, mantra and tantra. Jesus remained in India for twelve years. I am telling you all this in brief, I can also go into great detail, as I have the documentation on what I am saying. I am a widely travelled sannyasin. I can tell you everything in detail about every city and town in the world. I am a living geography and a living history. This is because all my life I have done nothing except travel and learn. I never managed the ashrams, I never counted money. I only travelled and learnt about this world. That has been my life and even now, it is the same.

So, Jesus was in India for twelve years. He learned mantra and tantra from the South, Vaishnavism from Jagannath Puri, Advaita Vedanta and its core philosophy from Kashi, and dhamma from the Buddhist monks in Ladakh. These influences are clearly reflected in his life-pattern and teachings. If you honestly reflect on the tenets and beliefs of Christianity, you will discern these influences.

My theme is very clear. Christ belongs to India and India is the cradle of Christianity. Mark my words: the cradle of Christianity is India. That is the point I want to make today, as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

In the Bible, there is absolutely no reference of these thirteen years which Christ spent in India. They only speak of his absence from Jerusalem, but they do not tell us where he went. Where was he for thirteen years? Nobody speaks about it. For twelve years, he was in India. When he returned to Israel, the scribes said, "Who is this boy? We are seeing him for the first time." This would mean that he was never in

Israel prior to that. The scribes said, “Who is this boy? He is a Jew. Where has he come from? We have not seen him before. Somebody says, he is the son of Joseph. Oh, I see.” This is how he was referred to at the age of thirty when he arrived in Israel after his sojourn in India.

After his return to Israel, Jesus led his ministry for three years. It is recorded that during that time he preached, he healed, he gave sight to the blind, he brought Lazarus back to life, and performed many other miracles which I do not have to mention, as they are well known to all. However, despite his extraordinary nature, he was crucified like a criminal. Yes, that’s true, and you know it!

Throughout his life, Buddha outright criticized the Vedas, which are the foundation of the philosophy, beliefs and religion of this land. But he was venerated and not crucified, even though he spoke against the beliefs of the people. This is because the Indian tradition is not to crucify a man who gives you a new idea. You may not agree with the idea, you may not agree with what I am telling you, but you have no right to crucify me. You have no right to crucify me because I am giving you a new thought; I am giving you an idea. If you don’t accept it, who cares! This is how Indians think.

Jesus was crucified like an ordinary criminal for opposing and openly criticizing the existing systems. He was made to carry that heavy cross through the streets, being jeered and scoffed at by everyone, and then he was nailed to the cross and left to bleed. After all that suffering, he was brought down and believed to be dead, put in a tomb and buried. But he did not die on the cross. He lived, he survived. Although he was very weak and had little strength, yet he survived and there is evidence in the Dead Sea scrolls that Jesus lived after the crucifixion.

Where did I start this story, do you remember? I started with the Dead Sea scrolls sold by shepherds to the Germans, which were taken to Germany and decoded or deciphered to reveal the presence of Jesus Christ at the monastery of the Essenes. This reference of Christ’s presence at the Essenes

monastery appears twice in the scrolls: first, when he was a child and the second, after the crucifixion. This means that he did not die on the cross. There are two clear references in the Dead Sea scrolls. Christ went there after the crucifixion. He was taken there for treatment and recovery from the deep wounds he received as a result of being nailed to the cross and left to bleed for hours.

There is also the shroud or cloth in which the body of Jesus was wrapped after he was brought down from the cross and laid in the tomb. This cloth, which is known as the Shroud of Turin and is a relic of that time, has been preserved. The DNA of the bloodstains on it was examined by experts. The tests revealed that the blood on the shroud was not that of a dead person, but of one who was still alive.

There are two proofs that Jesus Christ survived the crucifixion. He did not die on the cross, but he lived, he survived. One is a scientific proof and the other is historical. You may or may not agree with them, but these are facts that are being presented by scholars who are researching the history. On the third day he walked from the tomb. It was construed as a miracle. But instead, he was taken to the Dead Sea to the monks with whom he had lived in his childhood. There, he was treated with herbs and tonics, as he had become very weak due to loss of blood.

Jesus Christ was never really able to get back in shape after the crucifixion. He had spent one day on the cross, with nails hammered into his hands, feet and chest, and a crown of thorns placed on his head. It was a miracle that he survived. After managing to live through that ordeal, where did he choose to go? Back to Israel? Oh God, no! Then where could he go? Rome? Oh no! A militant, aggressive, decadent Rome – no one would go there. Only when an empire is in decadence does it become militant and aggressive. Remember this eternal truth. A nation never becomes aggressive and militant if it is not going through decadence.

Jesus Christ did not go to Rome. Instead, he came to Srinagar in India, along with his mother. Jesus himself was

aged between thirty-eight and forty at this time. His ministry lasted for only three years in Israel. From the Dead Sea, he travelled to Kur in Iraq and then, on to Srinagar. He lived quietly because, as I said, he was never again in proper shape after the crucifixion. He had become very, very weak.

There is also evidence that he breathed his last and died in India, where he was buried in a tomb. This tomb is now in an area which falls in occupied Kashmir. This is an open secret. Even history knows it, as there are books, pictures and even an epitaph on Jesus' grave. The name inscribed on that tomb is 'Eesu Asaf'. Another name on the tomb is 'Nabi Asaf'.

The caretaker of this tomb is a Muslim priest who also has a scroll. Scholars from Australia, Germany, England and the US have visited him and offered money just to have a look at the scroll and photograph it. But he will not do it. It is not his dharma. I know scholars who have gone there and actually seen that tomb, the scroll and the cloth of Jesus. That is the place where he lies in the grave and, mind you, that grave is in Jewish style. Remember, Jesus Christ was not a Christian. He was a Jew. He lived and died a Jew and the grave which they say is his, is also the grave of a Jew. His mother too died in India. In Srinagar, there is a tomb called 'Mariam ki Mazar'. It is in a shambles, I have seen it.

Now, what happened to that lady, Magdalene? She was a black Jew; she was not white, as is depicted in the painting, *The Last Supper*. Have you heard of a famous book, *The Da Vinci Code*? Leonardo da Vinci was an Italian painter and one of his most well-known paintings, *The Last Supper*, was executed on a wall in the monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan. That painting is a hint on the entire apostolic group of Jesus. Jesus is depicted with a red shirt and blue upper cloth. To his right is Magdalene, with a blue shirt and red upper cloth, colours just the opposite of Jesus. Next to her is Peter, whose left hand is on her throat, as if about to slit it, and in his right hand is a dagger. To the left of Jesus is John with his finger pointing up. What does it mean? If any of my disciples points a finger at me like that, what does it mean?

Indignation, opposition, denial, non-acceptance, disobedience. A disciple or follower cannot make such a gesture at his guru, but John did to Christ, his master and saviour. That is how 'the last supper' is depicted in the painting of Leonardo da Vinci. The strange thing is that there is nothing on the table of the last supper. There is no wine, no bread, no food. Imagine a supper without any of these. What does it mean?

As the story goes, after the crucifixion, Magdalene went to France. There, she gave birth to a female child who later married into a royal family in Southern France that ruled for over a century. They called themselves descendants of Jesus. It is now history. These people were persecuted by the crusaders during the dark period of the crusades in Europe. History bears evidence that one hundred thousand Christians of this faith were murdered in Southern France because they called themselves descendants of Jesus.

The book *The Da Vinci Code* has even been made into a film. It is a bestseller. Of course, it is fiction, but as I said earlier, history must be fictionalized if it is to survive the ravages of politically motivated races.

So, Jesus Christ whose birth you celebrated last night with mirth and joy, magic and songs, has more to do with India than with Israel. He has more to do with this culture than with Christianity, because he was not a Christian. He did not preach Christianity, remember it. Christianity came later.

Many years after the death of Jesus, his apostle Thomas came to Goa along the west coast of India. Twenty-three years



after the crucifixion, Thomas came to Goa and established the 'House of God' there. This church is the oldest Christian Church in the world today. Seven years before the Vatican was formed, Thomas established the 'House of God' in India. He did not call it a church; he called it 'House of God', Deoghar. The land where you are today and where we have our ashram is also known as Deoghar, which means house of god.

Thomas established the House of God, and not the Church of God. This was thirty years after the crucifixion and seven years before Peter established the church in Rome, that is, the Vatican. The rest of this story, you have to find out for yourself. I won't tell you because that is not my point of view. My point of view is very simple. This land of India is the cradle of Christianity. This is the cradle of the religion which you believe in. Jerusalem or Bethlehem or Israel are not the cradle of Christianity, they are the place of Jesus' crucifixion. The sad point of the story is the betrayal which took place there.

India, on the other hand, should always be understood as a cradle of knowledge, spirituality and dharma. For sannyasa and spiritual life, you come to India. For a job, you go to America. As simple as that. That is the land of jobs and this is the land of God. The whole purpose and motive of my speech this morning on this holy occasion, is that Jesus belongs to India and India will not renounce him. Of course, I don't believe in conversion of faith at all. Those who convert know the truth of politics and not the truth of religion, and those who get converted neither know the truth of religion nor the truth of politics.

I can always read the Bible. Who can stop me? I don't have to just read the *Ramayana* or *Shrimad Bhagavatam*. Nobody can stop me from reading what I want to read. This is my faith, this is my truth, this is my belief, this is my conviction. But my name is Swami Satyananda, I won't become Joseph or Simon, no. If I am called to a Shiva temple, I will certainly go. Just because I am a Christian, why can I not go to a Hindu god?

What kind of a religion are we preaching? What kind of truth are we talking about? God is one. But it is not the 'one' you learn in mathematics. This is the One of infinity, this is the One that represents totality, not the mathematical one, two, three, four, five, six, no. One plus One is equal to One. One minus One is equal to One. One multiplied by One is One. One divided by One is One:

*Poornamadah poornamidam poornaat poornamudachyate;
Poornasya poornamaadaaya poornameva avashishyate.*

It is the Vedic way of saying that One plus One is One, One minus One is One, One multiplied by One is One, One divided by One is One.

Our children have greeted Jesus this morning on this holy occasion. We did not greet him with a 'good morning' because that is a very secular, unclassical greeting. It is not at all a classical greeting when you say, "Good morning, Christ." You say, "Hari om, Christo." I think I have told you practically everything about this new story of Christ that is unfolding before us, thanks to the research scholars who are on the trail of Jesus. I have tried to present their findings to you so that Jesus can be historically and logically linked with India and thereby with all of you. Those who come from different lands should remember that this is your Deoghar. India is the house of God. Therefore, whenever you want to remember Jesus, whenever you want to be inspired and refresh yourself with spiritual energy, come to India.

India offers classical theories such as Advaita, which proclaims, "I and my father are one" – *Aham Brahmasmi*. This is Advaita, and Jesus said it too. India also epitomizes bhakti:

*Twameva maata cha pita twameva,
twameva bandhu cha sakhaa twameva;
Twameva vidyaa dravinam twameva,
twameva sarvam mama deva deva.*

"You are my father, you are my mother, you are my friend, you are my everything." Christ also said this. Then there is the

mantra and tantra which he learnt. Mantras for good health, mantras for marriage, for sickness, for hypnotism, mantras to win women also!

That is what the West will now have to learn from India: how to propitiate the divine energies, the divine powers, the divine guardians, to fulfil one's wishes. Jesus has given you hints about all this. Jesus is *Sarvesham guruvanam guruhu* – “the guru of all gurus.” Jesus is a guru, a jagatguru. Jesus is an avatara. Rama was an avatara, Krishna was an avatara, Buddha was an avatara and Jesus is an avatara.

Avatara means God in tangible form, a God you can see. Some people wonder, why is God born? He is born in order to help us all. We cannot apprehend His *nirakara roopa* or formlessness. It is not possible for the mind of man to comprehend the formlessness of God. Where will you base your mind? On what will your mind stick? God is formless, He has no form, He has no name, He has no place, He has no colour, He has no dimension. God realized that it is difficult for you to comprehend Him without a form. He thought, “This man is undergoing a lot of difficulties because I am formless. Okay, I create a form for you, my dear. I come as Rama, meditate on me.” The period of Rama passed, and then He came as Krishna. But what about the people of the West? They are so engrossed in material life and comforts. Therefore, He came as Christ.

Western thinkers who were orthodox and puritanical did not like Krishna and Rama because they were married. How can God marry? To be with a woman was considered an impurity. That is what they believed in during those days. For them sex was a sin. Shiva, oh no, he is a pagan god, he has two wives. Krishna, Ah! Casanova, he had many wives and lovers, too. Purity is an ideal; it is not a reality. Goodness is an ideal; it is not a reality. Immortality is an ideal; it is not a reality. Reality is what you see all around you. That is real. Okay, don't worship Shiva because he has two wives or Rama because he is married or Krishna because he is a playboy. If none of these are pure enough for you, then worship Christ. Christ was pure!

The Western people were greatly relieved to see a child of God who was purity incarnate. Enriched uranium, weapon-grade uranium, that's what they like. They only wanted a pure God. It is only a thirsty man who will want water, but a man who is not thirsty does not even think of water. A tired man only wants to sleep, but if you are not tired you don't want to sleep. It is only an impure mind which wants a pure god. Yes, it is a fact. We Hindus do not want a pure god; we want a God who lives life in the proper way, according to dharma. Rama lived life according to dharma. Mind you, I am not criticizing anyone; I am only correcting the facts, because there is always a mistake in one's vision. Indians are poor; they don't have money, so they always crave money. Wherever they go, they only want money because they don't have it. Westerners have plenty of money, so they don't want money, they want yoga.

These are the realities which I am placing before you so you can think about it. Why do we say we want only a pure God? If Christ had an intimacy with Magdalene, was he impure? Swami Satyananda says no, he was Jesus all the time. With or without, God is always God. Electricity is always electricity; it is not the heater or cooler or refrigerator or pump. God is always God, no matter what he may be.

Today, we pay our homage to this great man of history who was born about five hundred years after Buddha. He had early satsang and association with sadhus and mahatmas, lived in monasteries along the Dead Sea. He then came to India on a spiritual quest and visited the Hemis monastery in Ladakh, and then visited Kashi, Puri and South India. After that he went back to Israel, was crucified, and then came back to India where he died and was buried in accordance with the Jewish rites and rituals.

Finally, remember, India is the cradle of Christianity. This is my point this morning. I believe in being a good Christian. I am a sannyasin who belongs to the Shaiva tradition, but I am a devotee of Rama who is the icon of the Vaishnava tradition. I worship Krishna too, and every year, I worship Devi during the Sat Chandi Yajna. After that, during Christmas I worship

Christ in the kutir I have built for him. So, what harm is there if you are a Christian and go to a Shiva temple, or if you go to a Rama or a Vishnu temple, or if you worship Shakti? You still remain a Christian and I remain a Hindu. That does not change. Why should I convert you to the Hindu faith? Why? No. If you are Jefferson, you remain Jefferson; if you are David, you remain David. If you want to be baptized, go ahead. If you want your body to be consigned to fire, write it down in your will. If you want to go into a grave, no problem. These little things do not matter so far as Christianity and Jesus and dharma are concerned. Dharma is mainly concerned with one thing: "I am not this body, I am not this mind, I am not this experience, I am not this prana. I am effulgent light, which is enshrined in me, I don't know where, I don't know what. I must discover my identity, I must discover my identity with that real self."

I am not this house, nor am I the floor or the walls. I am Swami Satyananda, the owner of this house. Discover me rather than discovering this building. This body is a house of nine doors. In this body there is the Self that is effulgent, and you have to go very deep into it. You don't know how to go there, so either your Bible or your Ramayana or your Bhagavatam will tell you how to go to the Self. How to reach the Self? Some say you have to go in, but what does that mean? What does it mean to dive deep within in search of the Self? What does this word 'in' mean? You do go in every night when you sleep, but what do you get there? Only nightmarish dreams. No, this is something which you have to learn in yoga.

Satsang

17 October 2006



Changing Rikhia

Today, Rikhia is slowly entering the 21st century. We have PCOs, mobile networks, satellite connections, cyber cafes, internet, shops, traffic, and even nice, bright, well-dressed children in school uniforms going to school and ladies wearing nice saris and woollens in winter. Do you remember how it was here when I entered Rikhia in 1989? The ladies did not even have enough cloth to cover their bodies! If you enter a colony and the ladies are not clad properly due to poverty, what does it mean? That they are still living in the

primitive age. This was just one aspect of their plight and condition when I arrived here.

When Swami Satsangi went to the house of Narayana in the next village, Amarwa, she came back in trauma. Narayana was an old man who is no longer alive. He wanted her to visit his home because they were good friends. But things were never the same for her after she returned. She just kept questioning how they could live in that condition. I told her that this is how the majority of India lives. But she could not accept it. She said, “Even our dog lives better than that.”

As you can see, now things have turned. Today, the children speak English, chant in impeccable Sanskrit and have developed many other talents. They are full of surprises. Some of the girls even go by bicycle to Deoghar to study in college. The change is very apparent. The parents too have undergone a transformation. They are comfortable and happy, not in dire need as they were when I came in 1989. This change has taken place not because we have given them many things, but because the children, the kanyas and batuks who come here, have somehow brought prosperity to their families.

The kanyas have attracted prosperity to their homes. God alone knows how they have done it, but they have successfully attracted Lakshmi into their homes. Next year, I will introduce them to solar lamps so they can study in the evenings, since it is not possible for everybody to have electricity. We are trying to find out about solar lamps and have experimented with many different types. We have solar lamps that don't need any battery, switch or panels. They are very simple. You just fix them in the ground, they charge from the sun the whole day long and when it begins to get dark, they light up. This works well here because the sun is very strong. If we can provide one or two to each family, they will be able to light up their courtyards. It will act as a bright *diya*, small lamp, that will burn the whole night long. For the village and poor folk, this is sufficient. They will not need kerosene oil or lamps any more.

Yogic principles of heat and electromagnetism

Each of us belongs to a specific country, but nowadays we have all become international. Finland is the land of saunas. In fact, they have more saunas than people! I have enjoyed the primitive type of sauna in Finland, in which the heat is built up by heating stones from outside. It was very difficult for me to understand this concept, because we Indians are used to heat. It is all around us; we don't need to artificially heat our rooms, they are heated naturally. We are used to sweating and perspiring all the time.

There was an old friend of mine, a highly reputed yoga teacher in Belgium, Andre Van Lysbeth. He said, "Swamiji, when I take you to Finland, I will give you a surprise." The surprise was a sauna. He asked me how I liked it. I said, "In India I have it every day. Not only I, but millions of Indians have it every day. But they don't have stylish rooms for that, they have a thatched hut and the heat and the sweat."

A few days ago, when I went to Ludhiana, I stayed in a hotel and they had a sauna in the health club. The manager and owner wanted me to enjoy the sauna. I said, "Why do you have a sauna in your hotel? No! As an Indian I won't accept it because I don't need it. Millions of Indians have the experience of a sauna bath every day. If you want a sauna, go to a poor man's hut for half an hour, you will have the experience of a nice sauna. And you can pay that poor man five hundred rupees. For him that will be a fortune, he will have his pension." I told him frankly, just go to a poor man's hut, pay him five hundred rupees, stay there for half an hour and come out, your desire for a sauna will be fulfilled at a fraction of the cost you will have to pay at a five-star hotel's health club.

You see, the normal temperature of your body is 37°C. You know what is 37°C of heat? Maybe you don't have that kind of a temperature in New Zealand or Europe. You can experience that temperature in India, Africa, South-East Asia and especially China. When the heat outside is 37°C, it is absolutely unbearable. However, your body temperature is

37°C all the time and you are bearing it. I am talking from the view point of yoga. The heat of your body is 37°C, the heat which is unbearable outside. If ever you are in India during that period, you will say, “Oh God, I want an air-conditioner.” You will get sunstroke, and look here, you have the same temperature, and are you feeling it? No, you are not feeling it. You are very comfortable. The moment that temperature of your body decreases, you will have a fever. If your body temperature falls to 35°C, you will experience the symptoms of a fever. Did you ever think of that?

It is in this country, India, where the temperatures soar to that of the body temperature of 37°C, that yoga was discovered. Yoga was not discovered in the Arctic or semi-Arctic countries. Yoga was discovered in a country where the outside heat and the inside heat of the body are more or less parallel to each other. Therefore, while practising yoga, you should always keep one point in mind: the external heat in the room where you practise should not be very different from or lower than the temperature of the body. That is the



first lesson in yoga. If your body temperature is 35°C and you are practising yoga under a temperature of 23°C, there is a difference of 14 degrees. Your body of 37°C is exposed to a temperature which is 14 degrees below its temperature. Therefore, the body will have to adjust. After all, the body has to adjust with the external temperature, and when it cannot adjust, you have problems.

The room temperature for yoga practice should not be less than 25–28°C. But it is better if you practise in a room where the temperature is 30 or 35 degrees. It is hot here right now, but it is ideal for practising yoga. That is why the fans are off in your rooms, because I know that you will turn on the fans and practise, as you are all from semi-Arctic or Arctic countries. The fans are deliberately disconnected and there is a label there: ‘Switch Invalid’. Have you read it? Invalid. It doesn’t apply. The fan does not apply to your stay here. It is completely contradictory to your purpose of stay in the ashram. Your purpose of stay in the ashram will be defeated, contradicted, if you are provided air-conditioned or fan-cooled rooms for practising yoga, for you have come here to derive maximum benefits of yoga. Now you have the answer why the fans are disconnected. Providing fans is not a big problem for this ashram. The owners of fan companies visit this place every now and then. I can install a few hundred fans right now without paying a penny. That’s not at all the issue.

Yoga teachers must remember that the state of this body depends on its temperature. If your body temperature of 37°C falls down to 35°C, what will happen? You will experience delirium and faint, you won’t be able to walk or lift your limbs. If the temperature goes up to 40°C, your brain tissues will melt. This body is all about temperature and yoga practitioners have to be very aware of that. That is one point.

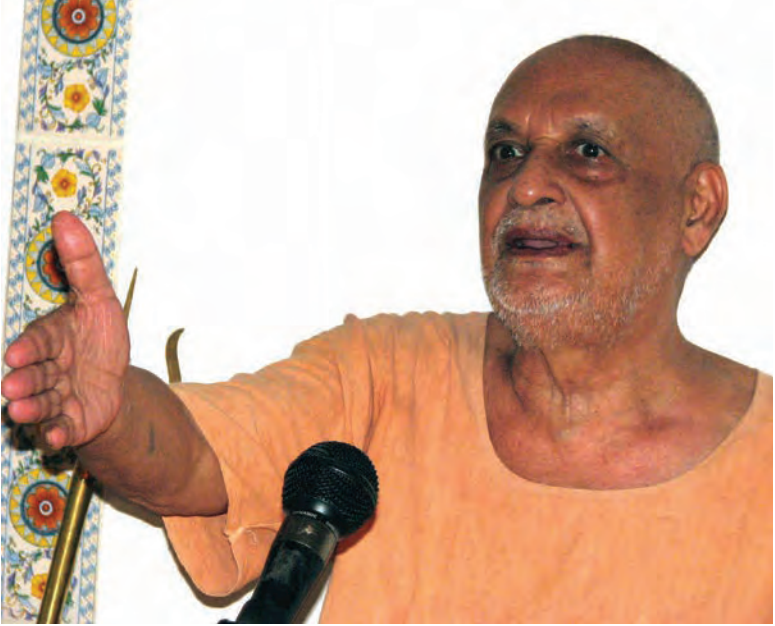
The second point is that this body is all about electromagnetic circuits. If there is a short circuit in the electrical system of your apartment, what will happen? Either the fuse will blow, if you have a good fuse, or all your

equipment will be damaged. In the same way, if there is a short circuit somewhere in the body, what will happen? Either a fuse will blow and you will get a warning signal or that organ or part of the body will be damaged. It can happen in your heart, your brain, your liver.

You have to maintain a proper system to ensure that the electromagnetic circuit in the body has the right voltage. Where does this energy come from? It comes from simple food. Not the tasty food, no. Energy comes from a simple diet and pure atmosphere. In this village, for miles and miles, there are no buildings, houses, offices or traffic jams. What you find here is just trees and fields, grazing cows and goats, cool breezes and pure air, and simple village folk. The nights are silent, except for the sound of frogs and crickets. Have you heard them? The carol you sing for the birth of Christ is, "Silent night, holy night; all is calm, all is bright." That must have been written with Rikhia in mind! That is how the nights here are – crisp, clear, calm and silent. The only sound is that of the crickets and nocturnal animals, they are the energizing agents of the electromagnetic circuits or energy circuits in the body. The energy circuits in the body recharge from the environment and atmosphere, the air, trees and animals, from the creatures God or Nature has created, perhaps to give more energy and sustain the electromagnetic field pervading within and around us.

Satsang

6 December 2006



Panchagni sadhana and Bhairava

When I was performing the panchagni sadhana, I had a dog. This is not that dog, this is Poorna. My earlier dog was very ferocious, one-pointed and duty-minded. One day, a swami came very close to his circuit and he just pulled her thumb out. She had to go to Australia for the necessary surgery. Poorna is more refined in his behaviour, he doesn't do such things. He has come for a different purpose and my earlier dog, Bholenath, came for a different purpose.

When I used to sit for long hours in panchagni, with temperatures soaring to 100°C, he used to sit by my side. He never left my side, no matter how hot or uncomfortable it was. He used to smear himself with bhasma, wear a rudraksha, and sit with me. You can say that he was a witness to the panchagni sadhana I did in Rikhia. The presence of a dog is essential in panchagni. It is a necessity because the dog is the vehicle of Bhairava. Just as the vehicle of Shiva is Nandi and the vehicle of Vishnu is Garuda, in the same way, in the tantric tradition a dog represents Bhairava. He represents that aspect of tantra which is esoteric.

You see, every sadhana is both exoteric and esoteric. The exoteric is what you can comprehend with your eyes, ears, nose, touch and taste. To comprehend the esoteric, one has to have a different eyesight, a different nose, a different hearing, a different sense of touch and taste. There is a lot taking place in the different spheres that exist immediately around us, but we cannot comprehend that because we do not have the ability. Dogs have a sixth sense. They can immediately pick up higher frequencies. Therefore, the presence of a dog is mandatory in higher esoteric sadhanas such as panchagni.

In the tantric tradition, Bhairava represents an inner state of experience, and the dog is the vehicle of Bhairava. What do I mean by 'inner state'? Happiness is an inner state, sorrow is an inner state, meditation is an inner state, samadhi is an inner state. What about the dreams you have at night? They too represent an inner state. The inner state is a position which you take at a particular time of your life. Sometimes you are happy, sometimes you are not. In other words, your thoughts, feelings, emotions, dreams, perceptions, understanding, all signify your inner state at that particular moment. In the same way, Bhairava is a highly refined esoteric inner state of being that is experienced when the mind transcends the barriers of time.

Hindus worship Bhairava as God. There are special temples made for Bhairava, and he assumes different forms:

Kala Bhairava, the destroyer of time; *Ananda Bhairava*, the blissful Bhairava; *Unmatta Bhairava*, the intoxicated Bhairava; *Vijnana Bhairava*, the Bhairava of specialized knowledge.

The literal meaning of *bhairava* is the howling sound that dogs make. Sometimes, at night you hear dogs howling loudly. That is what *bhairava* means. Bhairava is an inner state of being in spiritual life where you produce a sound without knowing or hearing it. Sometimes, you cry out in dreams, don't you? Many times you cry out loud in dreams, but you don't know that you are crying. So, what do you call it? Bhairava.

In the same way, in meditation when your awareness pierces through the veils and enters subtler dimensions, it encounters the sound of howling, wailing or barking. There is no one in your room, but you can distinctly hear the sound of a dog. So, in tantric esotericism, the dog represents Bhairava and during *panchagni*, which is a *smashan sadhana*, it is essential to represent Bhairava. Therefore, I kept a dog. Poorna is an incarnation of my previous dog Bholenath, whom I kept with me in the *panchagni*. There is a *samadhi*, a tomb for him here at Rikhia because I remember him. I should remember him because he was my companion.

During that difficult period, when I used to sit in between the fires, one fire, two fires, three fires, four fires, five fires. A fire to the left, a fire to the right, a fire in the front, a fire at the back and a fire above. Four fires were lit with wood and the fifth fire was the sun. So, I had to face five fires and these five fires that I am talking to you about are external. I was surrounded by external fires that were burning all around me from sunrise to sunset in the hottest months of the year. In addition, there was the fifth fire which was the hottest of all – a hydrogen fire. The sun is hydrogen, so hydrogen fire.

The five external fires represent the five inner fires, the inner state which we all have to face. That too I have faced during my lifetime. I think you too are facing it, but perhaps you lose the battle by falling sick. Do you know what the

five internal fires are? *Kaama*, desire; *krodha*, anger; *lobha*, greed; *moha*, attachment; *mada*, pride. These are the five fires raging inside all of you, and you are doing panchagni without knowing it. Even now, while you are sitting here, the fire is raging within you. We are all burning.

Have you ever studied the life of Buddha? He is one man whose life everybody should read about, especially in the West. It is worth it. He said, "O Bhikku! Everything is burning." *Bhikku* means beggar, and the words he said were, "O Bhikku! O Beggar! Everything is burning." We are all bhikkus, beggars. Why? Because we always want. Bring me a husband, bring me a wife, bring me a son, bring me money, bring me happiness, bring me clothes, bring me this, bring me that. Always wanting, never giving. You only know how to ask for something; you don't know how to give. Even when we give, we have our eyes set on what we will get in return. So, Buddha pronounced, "We are all burning." We are facing the fury of the five fires, and in that sense, you are being cooked by the internal fires. Unless you learn to endure, you cannot overcome the fires. The secret lies in endurance. So, Bholenath was a beautiful Alsatian whom I kept as my constant companion during the panchagni at Rikhia. Day and night, he was by my side, keeping vigil and not allowing anyone to come near me.

He came to me for the panchagni and the day my panchagni sadhana finished, he left his body the same night. He just came, put his head on my lap and departed. Now he is born as Poorna, who is just the opposite of Bholenath. Poorna sits near that fig tree all day long eating figs. He sits underneath the guava tree and when a guava falls, he will eat it very carefully because he doesn't have the teeth for that. He goes to the pantry and steals potatoes and onions. Never heard of such a dog, have you? He likes the same food which you eat in the kitchen. When Swami Satsangi finishes eating, he is by her side, and a plate is prepared for him with rice, dal, vegetables, chutney and sometimes salad as well. He eats it all with great gusto.

Bholenath would not eat this rubbish. Even if he died of hunger, he would refuse to eat it. If we served him rice, dal and vegetables from the kitchen, he would demand his own food by going on a hunger strike. So, he had a man in Deoghar, a Muslim, who was his patron. His wife used to bring his food every day. And I had to cook it, which was very difficult for me because I have never done that. So, someone from Bulgaria supplied an electric casserole. That made it easy, because I had to do nothing, just put everything into the casserole and switch it on before sitting down for meditation at 2 am. By 8 am it was ready. I would leave it to cool for a few hours and by the evening, it was ready for him to eat. I did everything for Bholenath myself. Before his death he just came to me, lay down near my chair, put his head on my lap and breathed his last. That is called a peaceful death.

In the system of tantra, there are five distinct traditions. There may be many more because tantra is a vast science, but the main systems are five. These five divisions of tantra are devoted to Shiva, Shakti, Vishnu, Ganesha and Saurya or the sun. Each of these systems has its own rites and rituals, mantras and modes of worship, according to the deity being invoked. I am talking about the Shaiva tradition now, which advocates that Shiva is the highest reality, the highest experience and the culmination of all experiences. There is nothing greater than Shiva.

Prior to the experience of Shiva consciousness, you have to encounter the experience of Bhairava, an inner experience, which can be very frightening. It is the experience of crying, weeping, wailing. When somebody gives you a tight slap, what do you do? Exactly that experience of wailing comes before the final experience of merging into the Shiva consciousness. So, before bliss, one has to pass through the piercing scrutiny of Bhairava, who is the security officer of Shiva, or an aspect that Shiva assumes to find out if you are really fit to enter his domain. This is according to the Shaiva tantric tradition.

You will find that wherever there is a temple of Shiva, on the outskirts is a temple of Bhairava. Before entering the temple

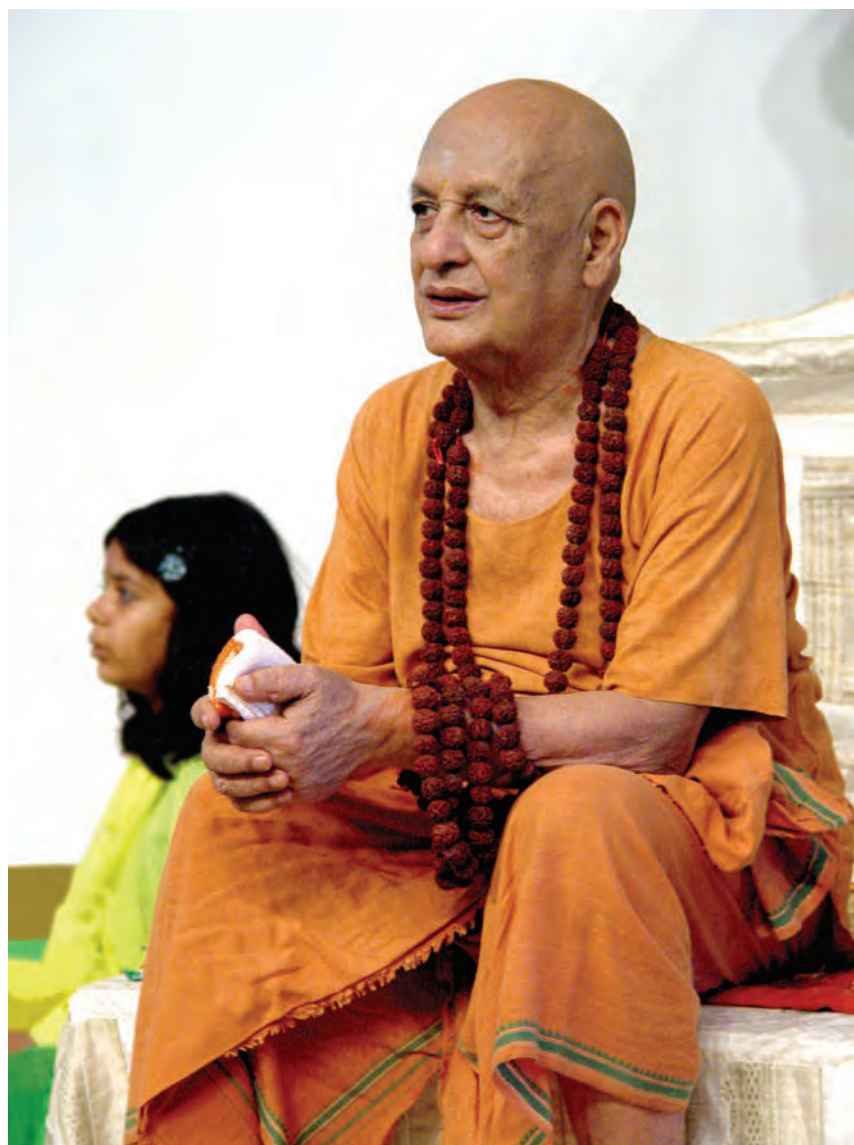


of Shiva, you have to pass through the temple of Bhairava so that you can be properly screened with his X-ray vision. Tantra says that in order to realize the Shiva consciousness, you have to first realize the Bhairava consciousness, which comes to the aspirant as the experience of crying, wailing or screaming. In deep states of meditation, sometimes the sadhaka lets out a loud wail which he may or may not be fully conscious or aware of. I don't know if you understand me or not, as these are experiences which cannot be explained very well. Even in normal situations, when a person cries, he is not at all aware of it. He is more or less lost in the experience. Only when he is done with the crying does he realize the extent of his emotional outburst.

Of course, the state I am talking about is an inner state, not an external act. Sometimes, this inner state is so intense that the sadhaka lets out a loud wail, and that is an indication of the heights he is traversing, which, according to the tradition of tantra, is the experience of Bhairava. Bhairava is not a man, but he is a man within man.

















The stillness of Rikhia

The ideal place to meditate is a place like Rikhia where the air and water are pure, where the electromagnetic energy field is intact and thought frequencies are low. Do you know that the thoughts you think are released by you and travel as thought waves, and others pick them up knowingly or unknowingly? This is happening all the time in big cities where millions of people live and emit thought waves twenty-four/seven. Apart from thought waves, there is an abundance of sound waves clashing with each other, which enter our antahkarana due to the constant chatter which people cannot live without.

Silence or *mouna* is a luxury in crowded cities. This is why Rikhia is ideal, as there is silence, stillness and timelessness in the atmosphere because of the simple life that people live here. So, when I meditate, I do not have to encounter the useless chatter of either thought waves or sound waves, which can be a big hindrance in sadhana. In meditation, the mind becomes very sensitive and picks up all frequencies. Of course, I do not face any difficulty in meditation, even if it is the noisiest place, because I know how to block thoughts and sounds. This is also the reason why everybody likes mountains. Mountains supply energy, as they are created by energy explosions.

Spread of Buddhism, future superpowers

Buddhism did not go directly to Japan from India. Buddhism first travelled from India to China via Tibet. From there, it went to Korea and then from Korea to Japan. So, Buddhism reached Japan in a roundabout way from India, not through China, as the relations between the two countries were strained even then. The Japanese tried many times to come to India to further their knowledge of Buddhism, but they failed for one reason or the other. Many travellers, scholars, traders and aspirants tried to reach India from Japan, but they couldn't make it. There were many problems at different times. Ultimately, Japan formed a diplomatic pact with China. It was then that China and Japan became friends and

there was cultural exchange between the two countries. This allowed the Japanese to travel to China and learn Buddhism first-hand from the acharyas of Tibet, which was then a part of India. Acharya Padmasambhava lived in the Chinese court and disseminated the teachings of Buddha as well as the knowledge of Pali and Sanskrit. This is all chronicled.

I have extensively travelled in Japan by train. Swami Satsangi was with me. We travelled by bullet trains that travel at high speeds of 250 km per hour. They are very comfortable, neat and clean, and silent inside. Despite the high speed, you do not feel any discomfort. In many rural areas of Japan, you find small, ancient dilapidated temples of vedic gods. At one time they must have been frequented by people, but now no one performs any worship there. They are just relics of a time gone by.

They are not Buddhist gods or bodhisattvas. No! They are not even Rama and Krishna or any other Pauranic gods. They are temples dedicated to the vedic gods who have been relegated to the background even in India, the land of the Vedas. The vedic gods are Indra, Mitra, Matarishwa, Agni, Varuna, Soma. Today, we do not worship them, except in a brief ritual performed during big yajnas or havans. In daily worship or pooja, we worship the Pauranic gods such as Rama and Krishna.

I travelled to Tokyo, Osaka, Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Kyoto and many other cities, towns and villages of Japan. I even lived in their monasteries. They have many rooms and passages leading to the inner chamber. The monasteries are like a maze with wooden floors, so that the person meditating in the innermost chamber can know when someone is approaching by the sound of the footsteps on the wood. I have participated in their tea ceremonies, where they have perfected the art of drinking tea to the level of meditation.

I was invited by Dr Hiroshi Motoyama, who has done a lot of research on kundalini and chakras, to his house where he showed me all his old manuscripts and relics. In Japan, you have two scripts, not one. There is a Japanese script and there is also a Sanskrit script for extra sounds that do not exist in the Japanese script. Dr Motoyama follows the

Shinto religion, and he showed me the place where the ashes of ancestors are kept by the Japanese for seven generations. Each year, the family members go there to worship, offer incense and pay their respects, a custom very similar to the shraaddha ceremony in India, which Indians follow up to this day. He also showed me his chakra machine which was quite interesting, as it depicted on a monitor the awakening and activity in chakras during meditation.

This is how Buddhism spread to foreign shores from India, the country of its origin. Even now, these countries are Buddhist. Korea is still a vibrant Buddhist country. North Korea will soon merge with South Korea. That is essential for the forthcoming global politics. The forthcoming superpowers of the world would like to see North and South Korea united, India and Pakistan united, North and South Ireland united. The present political superpowers want to divide and rule. That is their philosophy: divide and rule. But forthcoming superpowers will see better in peace and prosperity, in 'unite and rule'. You can see that in Europe where, with the historic formation of the European Union, the trend is now 'unite and rule'. Previously, they used to say 'divide and rule' because in those days, there was competition in business. Now, there is no question of competition. There has to be business at any cost, that's all, and to have such business it is necessary to have unity. That is wisdom and that is what the future superpowers, whoever they may be, will realize. The contenders for this position are only two at present: China and India. We can compare these two countries to the hare and the tortoise.

This is a story from the *Panchatantra*, a book of interesting parables, each of which has a moral. Once there was a race between a hare and a tortoise. The hare was swift and fast, and the tortoise slow. As the whistle for the race blew, the hare took off at great speed and soon reached the half-way mark. He looked behind and saw that the tortoise was nowhere in sight and realized that he had left him far behind. So the hare, whose heart was palpitating very fast due to the speed with which he had been running, said, "Let me grab a few winks,

no harm in that, the tortoise is way behind. I am tired. After a short rest, I will complete the race in no time.” After all, when you go on a run, it is the heart which bears the load. If the heart doesn’t cooperate, what will happen? After one hundred yards you will sit down and say, “Let me have a little bit of rest.” So, the hare lay down to rest and the tortoise, who had been walking at an even pace, kept going slowly but steadily.

Soon, the tortoise caught up with the hare who was sleeping soundly and by-passed him. When the hare had his full rest after the fast gallops, he woke up, and what did he see? The slow tortoise had reached the winning post and he had lost the race, despite his fantastic start. He could not believe his eyes. When he lay down to rest, he was overconfident that he would win and not the tortoise. But the tortoise proved that slow and steady wins the race. This is my hint to Indians and also to the kriya yoga students who are attending the seminar here in Rikhia: slow and steady wins the race.

The same rules apply in spiritual life as well as political life. If you want to become a superpower, you have to be slow and steady. After all, the tortoise, though slow, did reach ahead of the speedy hare. Did he not? It is not a question of how fast you go. No! It is not important how fast you move. It is important that you reach your destination or goal. It is not important how fast you progress in kriya yoga every day. There is no use in being obsessed with the practices of kriya yoga. Morning and night, all you think about is kriya yoga and you are anxious because you feel that you are not getting the results you want. No! No! That is not the way to practise yoga. Be at home, be relaxed, lead your life properly, not with tension, but in a relaxed way and practise yoga too in a slow and steady, relaxed way. Never be in a hurry, for life is eternal.

If you have to face the five fires that are raging inside, face them. One day, the fires will become exhausted because everything has an expiry period. The antibiotics, do they have an expiry period or not? My suggestion to you is remember

what Buddha said, “Every object in the universe has an expiry period.” Life has an expiry period, seventy, eighty, ninety years. This house has an expiry period, eighty, ninety, hundred, two hundred years. This earth, the sun, the moon, the Mars, although they may last a little longer, do they have expiry periods or not? Remember, Buddha said, “O Bhikku! Everything in this universe has an expiry date. Nothing is immortal, nothing is permanent.”

Your passions are also not permanent. One day, they will get exhausted, but don't think of leaving them today. Today, I don't even remember my passions. Did I ever have them? I don't remember my anger, I don't remember my desires. I am still alive and they are gone. Be patient, your five fires will also pass away. Don't be tormented, don't feel the guilt, don't be sorry. Don't even think that you are a sinner. Don't even think that you are at fault. When it is raining, you will be wet; when there is sun, you will be hot; when it is winter, you will be cold, but the seasons pass. Likewise, passion passes away, anger passes away, lust passes away, life passes away. I



will live. This is how the people who have studied kriya yoga here must think. They must think that they have to become superpowers in spiritual life, but like the tortoise, not like the hare. Similarly, India and China will also have to think about their ways of progress.

So, I was saying, in the course of time, the future superpowers in this world will have a different political attitude. The rulers who came from the West always divided countries, continents and territories in order to rule. I am not criticizing the West. I am merely stating a fact because this is how they have ruled: by dividing. Everyone knows it. But the time has come for the policy of unite and rule, and the future superpower, whether it be China or India, one of the two, because there is no third superpower besides these two, will have to change the way of divide and rule set down by the West.

A superpower must have a definite philosophy and it must be a country that thrives on diversity, plurality and magnanimity. Superpowers must have many races, many creeds, many religions living together as one nation, struggling together, surviving together, growing together. That is called plurality. Japan does not have it. Russia had it, but it is broken. Europe is in the frying pan, as it is having a lot of difficulty. There is no difficulty in India, the poorest of the poor in Bihar and the richest of the rich in the South, all exist in this land, no problem. The affluent and the poor, the educated and the illiterate, the believers in God and the non-believers, the cynics and sceptics and the ones with faith, the intellectual professionals and the labour class, all can exist together. One religion, one language, one law is incorrect. In India, along with the universal civil law, we have different laws for tribals, Christians, Muslims, which are called Personal Laws.

We have different languages, different cultures and so many gods. That is good. Everybody can have a different god. Why do you ask me to worship only one? My god has a tail, your god has no face, funny! My god is a woman with a sari, your god has no body at all. But both are correct. This tolerance of other people's views is essential because it leads

to a climate of peace, development and growth. So, India has a chance, if it is not disturbed in any way.

If a climate of peace is maintained, there will be less expenditure on the State for the police, army and defence. Then, other areas can be developed, which are imperative for growth. People can then travel easily without any borders for jobs, business and making money. In India, you can take potatoes from Bihar to South India overnight. Just hire a truck and send your goods wherever there is demand, nobody stops the traders. If South India has no onions or potatoes due to some local difficulty such as rain or failure of crops, the traders can do good business by sending truckloads of potatoes. There is no problem. But you can't do that in Europe, you will be stopped at the border of the country.

In a big country, if one state has technical skill and another state has agricultural skill, and yet another state has business skill, they can do better business or trading. South Indians have good technical skills, Biharis are very good workers, while Gujaratis, Marwaris and Sindhis are very good at business, they have that skill. India has that advantage, its people have diverse skills.

Here in India, I can go to Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, anywhere, and sell my goods. In this way, the prices are also controlled. Not that a big country like India does not have its own set of problems, which are sometimes insurmountable. One of the biggest problems countries like India face is infighting between religious groups. They simply cannot coexist and see eye to eye. Every country has different issues to deal with.

In history, Tibet has always remained a country without war. The lamas were running the country and it was given protection for many thousand years. Tibet was protected by a treaty between Mongolia and Tibet. Mongolia was once upon a time a very powerful country, even before the time of Genghiz Khan. There was a treaty between Tibet and Mongolia that if at any time any army invades Tibet, Mongolia would come to protect it. Many neighbouring armies did try

to invade Tibet, but Mongolian armies were there so Tibet couldn't be taken.

The religion of Tibet is Buddhism. There is only one religion in the world which does not talk of God. All other religions have God at the epicentre of their teachings. They subsist on the theory that there is a God. Buddhism is the only religion which does not talk of God. When Buddha was asked by his disciples and devotees about God, he said, "Look here, God is not my subject. I don't know him, I have not seen him. You say he is beyond mind, if he is somewhere I don't know. But I know that there is pain, and that pain is real. I experience pain and you too experience pain. So, whatever is real, whatever is in the scope of experience, that I talk about." All throughout his life, Buddha avoided God.

So, Tibet was the only country which was ruled by a religion without God. The Dalai Lama can be from any religion. A Hindu can become the Dalai Lama or a Christian can become the Dalai Lama. One of the descendants of Genghiz Khan, a Muslim, became a Dalai Lama. It was the only country that tried this very good experiment and we are sorry that we have lost it. We do hope that some time in the future it becomes independent, but through the path of *ahimsa*, non-violence.

Buddha did not believe in the path of violence to get anything done, whether the problem is that of Palestine, Iraq, Iran or Hitler-ridden Germany. Buddha said, *Ahimsa paramo dharmah* – "Ahimsa is the highest dharma." There is nothing greater than ahimsa or non-violence in thought, word and deed. This is the dictum of Buddha. Thus, Buddhism does not at all recommend violence, nor does it accept or condone it. Non-violence is a supreme religion. Therefore, the freedom of Tibet should be attained, if at all, not by military forces or guerrilla wars, but by non-violent methods. People want to get things done at the point of the gun. That is not the right way. Buddhism does not believe in it.

Satsang

October 2007



Can you speak to us about the education of children? Nowadays, the culture which children are being exposed to in cities is just music, dance and glamour. What can we do about their spiritual exposure?

As far as spirituality is concerned, each child will have to decide for himself. Parents cannot decide that for the child. They can only give samskaras to the child and inculcate good habits in him. They may train the child on how to live in society and what disciplines to follow for the body, mind, family, home and ultimately, for the larger society

in which he lives. They can give him health tips, education tips, career tips, marriage tips and religious exposure. This much the parents can do, but as far as spiritual life is concerned, the child will have to discover it for himself, because spirituality is the seed of human life. It is in everyone, regardless of gender, nationality, class, creed or religion. Whether it is a child in Mumbai, New York or Mongolia, or even the remotest recesses of the North or the South Pole, the spiritual seed is in one and all. What is that spiritual seed? The root of the spiritual seed is awareness of the Self, or rather, the divine awareness of God, which is there in everyone.

Do not equate or confuse social qualities with spirituality. For example, you teach your child to be good because it is good for society. Your child should be good because he has to live in society. You impress on your child the need to be educated because he has to have a career. You insist on marriage because that is the way society is structured. You can only guide him in the avenues which will make him capable of surviving in the society into which he is born. However, apart from all this, without any guidance from you or anyone, sometime or the other, he will discover for himself an invisible presence of God.

In fact, that is the only thing that parents should be able to teach a child, but they cannot. It is not at all possible for parents to teach a child the invisible presence of God. They cannot fulfil that role. Therefore, children should be allowed to follow a free career in life. Children should be given freedom by parents to pursue a career, hobbies and interests of their choice. Children should also be exposed to music. Music is one way through which a child can enter into spiritual life. If the child likes yoga, pooja and worship, reading the scriptures, well and good. But if he does not, don't force him. Instead, push him towards music, because nobody dislikes music. Even a venomous cobra snake likes music. Once you push a child into music, whether it is folk, pop, disco or classical, any kind of music where there is

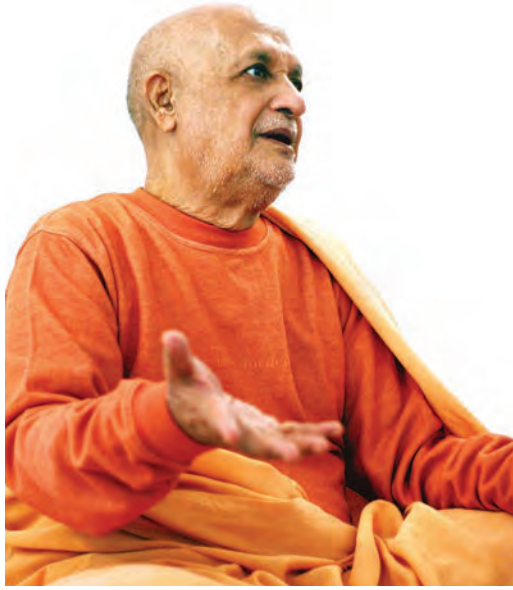
rhythm, his journey of self-discovery will start and the seed will begin to sprout.

Music is not just holding a mike and singing. Music is a powerful medium by which the mind directly deals with sound. Music is the system in which you deal with the mind through sound. Whether it is vocal, instrumental, fast or slow, sitar, veena, violin, guitar, tabla or drums, they all emit sounds of different frequencies and intensities. Once the mind deals with sound, a definite change takes place in the level or sphere of the brain waves. Altered brain waves produce an altered state of mind that is more harmonized, balanced, homogeneous, and in tune with the self. This results in a highly subtle and refined awareness. The moment your mind alters from gross to subtle, you are spiritual. That is why people who deal with music are always highly spiritual and very close to the awareness of that unseen presence, God.

In the Puranas, when Lord Vishnu is asked by one of his most ardent admirers, Narada, “Lord, please tell me where do you reside.” he replies, “Look Narada, I do not reside in Vaikuntha (paradise), I don’t even reside in the hearts of the yogis. I reside in the place where my bhaktas sing my name”:

*Naham vasaami Vaikunthe, yoginaam hridayena cha;
Mad bhakta yatra gaayante, tatra tishthaami Narada.*

It is a definite fact that music, dance and the fine arts can help in developing your spiritual personality. It is music, dance and art that distinguishes man from animals and other forms of life. Music and dance are expressions of a refined mind, a mind that can dive deep into inner experience. So, don’t blame Mumbai and Chennai for cultural decadence. Let the children listen to all kinds of music because it is the rhythm in music that influences the mind. That is why everyone likes kirtan. Rhythm is the heart of a kirtan. It is not the words or the singer, but the rhythm or the beat the kirtan follows that does the magic of transporting the listener to the dimension of *ananda* or bliss.



Lord Shiva is known as *Nataraja*, lord of the dance, and Krishna is known as *Natwara*, the dancer. And Mumbai is a khichari culture, everything there is imported. Their ways of living, dressing, talking and even thinking is imported because Mumbaiites are not indigenous. Most of them hail from other states or even countries, but have been settled there for generations. The Parsis, who are an integral part of Mumbai, came from Iran. They brought with them their own ways of talking, eating, socializing and dressing, which can be noticed even today. That is not at all bad and I am not criticizing this or speaking of it in a negative sense. In fact, all of India is a khichari of cultures, which can be easily seen in the diversity of its people. The magnanimity of this diverse land is echoed in the Vedas which say: “May good and noble things come to me from every side, from every direction” – *Aa no bhadraaha kratavo yantu vishvataha*. Good thoughts, good language, good food, good table, good sofa, good home, good job, let it come to me from every side!

Can you talk about jnana yoga, and is jnana yoga a raja yoga?

The vedic tradition speaks of three paths that an individual has to follow for personal evolution. Just as you have evolution of a society, a political system, an education system, so on and so forth, in the same way, there is something known as personal evolution, which relates to you alone. It does not include even your nearest and dearest ones, such as your husband, wife, children, mother, father, brother or sister. It is perhaps the only aspect of yourself that you can truly call your own.

The three paths of personal evolution are karma yoga, bhakti yoga and jnana yoga. In each of these paths you deal with yourself, but the methods of dealing are different. In the path of karma yoga, you deal with yourself through enactment of *karma*, action. In bhakti yoga, you deal through emotions, feelings and devotion. In jnana yoga, you deal with yourself through *buddhi*, intellect. When I use the phrase ‘deal with yourself’, I mean dealing with your mind. Throughout life, that is what you are doing: dealing with the mind. Your life is just a play of the mind; therefore, to deal with life you have to deal with the mind, or vice versa.

When I speak of dealing with the mind, I do not just mean the conscious mind or the gross material awareness. In fact, I mean that all dimensions of the mind have to be dealt with, from the conscious to the unconscious. In order to deal with the mind at all levels, you have to remove the *avarana* or covering, in the form of karmas that prevent you access to those deeper realms. This refinement of mind from all extraneous material is enhanced by karma yoga or the yoga of perfection.

The refined mind then begins to perceive the reality and the process of knowledge begins, as the second barrier of *avidya*, ignorance, that prevents access to the deeper realms is slowly removed. This is accomplished through jnana yoga. This is why all yoga books begin with the sentence, “Now, therefore, I teach you yoga.” This is the first line in all yoga texts that

expound the system of yoga. In the *Yoga Sutras* of Patanjali, the sage starts his exposition by saying, *Attha yoganushasanam* – “Now, therefore, the disciplines of raja yoga.”

So, in order to learn jnana yoga and practise jnana yoga, first of all, you have to fulfil certain conditions. Otherwise, your foray into jnana yoga will only be intellectual and not experiential. Intellectual knowledge is not experience; intellectual knowledge is just information. If you have not eaten a particular sweet, but have read about it, you may be able to say everything about that sweet, but your knowledge will be incomplete because you have not tasted it and have no experience of it. Experience is personal knowledge and this applies to jnana yoga, which provides personal knowledge of the Self.

The prerequisites for jnana yoga are a peaceful and balanced mind, restrained senses, disenchantment from worldly pleasures, endurance, faith in guru and God. They are defined as *sama* or balance; *dama*, control of the senses; *uparati*, indifference to worldly pleasures; *titiksha*, endurance; *shraddha*, faith in the unseen; *samadhana*, the final realization. These six conditions are the prerequisites for a jnana yogi. Following these principles makes him fully prepared for the experience of jnana or knowledge of the Self. If he does not fulfil these conditions, but only goes through the Upanishads, the *Brahma Sutras* and the Vedas, then it will only be intellectual knowledge, not experiential.

Every yoga has its own textbook. Just as the *Yoga Sutras* is the textbook of raja yoga, *Shandilya Bhakti Sutras* and *Narada Bhakti Sutras* are the textbooks of bhakti yoga, the *Bhagavad Gita*, the *Mimamsa Sutras* and the *Dharma Sutras* are the texts of karma yoga. In the same way, the textbook of jnana yoga is the *Brahma Sutras*, which consists of aphorisms on Brahma. The *Brahma Sutras* should be studied after studying the *Panchadashi*, which is an important text of fifteen chapters defining in technical terms the highest reality. Swami Vivekananda, Swami Sivananda and Yogi Aurobindo have written very good commentaries on jnana yoga.

Sat Chandi Mahayajna

27 November 2008



Kanyas of Rikhia

I will introduce you to these beautiful, innocent children. These kanyas, who epitomize the beauty of Rikhia and the beauty of this yajna, are chosen as the medium of the formless, Divine Mother. They have been chosen as the medium. Just as you choose a copper wire as the medium of conducting electricity because it is a good conductor. In the same spirit, in the same way, and in the light of the same technology, we have chosen these kanyas as the medium, as they are good conductors of the divine energy which we are invoking in this Sat Chandi Maha Yajna.

All of you are the guests of this grand yajna, and these kanyas are the hosts. They do not belong to the upper crust of society, what is called the creamy layer. They do not even belong to the middle class or the lower middle class of society. They belong to the strata of society which many in the West and even in India do not know about. It is called 'no class'. They have no status in society. They collect cow dung every morning. They carry the load and stock of paddy and wheat from the field to the granary. They take the cattle for grazing. They rise early before sunrise and go out in the fields for their toilet. They bathe in the pond and then they walk great distances to collect dried leaves to take home so their mother can light a fire to cook food. They have a very different way of life, which you cannot even imagine. But they are simple, innocent and meek.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." This is stated in the Bible. Blessed are the meek, the poor and the humble, because they shall inherit the earth. The poor people have no profile in society. The meek and the humble people have no profile in society. It is the wealthy, the affluent and the powerful who have a high profile in our society. These meek people belong to the 'no profile' category. They have neither low profile nor high profile; they simply exist without any profile.

The Bible proclaims that these are the people who will inherit this earth, for they will continue to exist for millions and millions of years. They are so simple and meek that they can survive in any condition and not raise a voice. They have survived amidst the ravages of nature, they have survived without a roof over their head, they have survived the pangs of hunger, they have survived the dangers of living with snakes, scorpions and mosquitoes. You would not survive even one day on the water they drink or the food they eat! This is why they will inherit the earth.

The affluent who live in comfort cannot survive in calamities. It is these meek and humble people who will outlive all calamities and start afresh. If they don't survive, your earth

will become barren, because you cannot inherit the earth. This is what I have read in the Bible, this is what I have read in the Koran and this is what I have read in the Upanishads.

In this yajna, you will be the guests of these poor, humble, simple, innocent and meek children. They are all the blessed children of Rikhia who were born after I came to live here. This place is known as Rikhia, which means a place of rishis, a place of sages and seers. These children never see me because I live in seclusion. It is Swami Satsangi who arranges everything for them and interacts with them. She has been doing this for the past eighteen years. That is how I have introduced all these children to you, who will host you for the next five days, and on the fifth day, we will worship them with Kanya Poojan. This is a very sacred tantric ceremony in which the kanyas are worshipped as the living, breathing manifestation of Devi. They are not Devi, they are the medium of Devi, through whom She will manifest and bless us all.

The concept of kanya is not unknown to Christians and it is very well known to Indians. The kanya signifies the idea of virginity, which is integral to Christianity, where you have the concept of the Virgin Mary. The kanya signifies the aspect of energy when it is raw and also pure, untouched and unaware of its own potential. Through worship, the kanyas become the medium for the descent of the refined and luminous energy of Devi and through them we receive Her blessings.

Bharatnatyam

The kanyas will now present an auspicious dance, to propitiate Gauri and Ganesha. Gauri is the mother and Ganesha is the son. We have beautiful combinations of relationships in bhakti yoga. Radha-Krishna is one combination, which signifies lover and beloved. Subhadra and Krishna is another combination, which signifies sister and brother. They are combinations in bhakti bhava: mother and son, friend and friend, brother and sister. That is the bhava in bhakti. This is now going to be conveyed through the classical dance of

this land, *Bharatnatyam*, to propitiate Gauri and Ganesha, mother and son.

This was the dance which I learned when I was eight years old, and I continued to give performances until 1962. After that, when I started teaching yoga, I stopped dancing in public. I learnt dance in Almora, in 1929, 1930, 1931 from a renowned dancing institute of India, Uday Shankar Indian Culture Centre. They had their headquarters in Almora, which is my birthplace, and there I used to learn Bharatnatyam. Later, I used to give dance recitals from time to time in the ashram of my guru, where many accomplished dancers such as Rukmini Devi Arundale, used to come. Of course, now I am eighty-five and find it difficult to dance like that!

God

God is a very old man. The God which you believe in is so ancient that He never dies. Perhaps He was never born. If at all He was born, He must have been born billions of years ago and how old will He now be? I am only eighty-five. Your God is older than me, still you are having a romance with Him.

Children

Go to any ashram in India. Go to any religious place in the world. You will not find so many children participating in the most serious ceremonies anywhere. They will come if there is Michael Jackson or Madhuri Dixit. But they will not come if there is Ramayana. Only old people will come.

You can find this particular atmosphere in Rikhia throughout the year. You are lucky to be here. It is a joy to be with children. If I was married I would have had only two or three, but as a sannyasin I have so many. I am enjoying my paternity! I am a father without paying the tax! A little joke is good.

From the 1st of January till the 31st of December, this atmosphere is there all throughout the year in Rikhia. You will find the children sometimes in blue, sometimes in red,



sometimes in jeans, sometimes in tracksuits, sometimes in skirts and blouses. They have been coming here for the last eighteen years. Many have graduated; many are now married and even have children. Many have gone to Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune, Asansol, everywhere. Rikhia is spread all over now. In another fifty years, it will spill all over the world, because children are the future of earth. We are the past. Not even the present, let alone the future.

The children are the future of earth. If they are groomed properly in a free atmosphere, with free expression and a good environment, they will create a new earth, a new society, and Rikhia is an example. You call it religion, I accept it. You call it spirituality, all right. You call it mysticism, occultism, okay. And if you call it joy and recreation, perfect! Everything is here.

Christmas

25 December 2008



Kriya yoga and balancing of energy

The energy which we talk of in the practices of kriya yoga is not just the energy which produces heat or motion. I am not talking of the energy which is heat and motion. I am talking of the energy which is able to unlock the interior door. It is very difficult to unlock the inner door, but once you are able to unlock it, you can become a Buddha or a Christ.

There is another aspect which you have to keep in mind. They say that these yogas must be practised in a place where there is plenty of oxygen. If that were so, then what is the

importance of caves spoken of in the ancient ages? All the great yogis lived in caves.

A cave is a place where carbon is locked. There is oxygen, but in small quantities. It is carbon that is in abundance in caves. What then is the role of carbon in spiritual life? We always talk about how harmful carbon emissions are, you know, the Greenhouse effect, the current topic occupying all your minds. Compare this with the lives of most of the yogis you hear about. What do you hear about them? They lived in this cave or that cave. Even kriya yoga's Babaji lived in a cave; he did not live in a palatial mansion with lots of oxygen and fresh air.

So, what is the relevance of carbon? Why do you all say that an ashram should be situated on the banks of a river, where there are plenty of negative ions, soft breezes and ample oxygen? All the great yogas are performed in caves, as they abound in carbon because of low ventilation. In Spain, I visited a sacred place called Monserrat, which is famous for the Black Madonna. Thousands throng it daily for the fulfilment of their wishes, as it is a *jagrat*, or awakened, shrine of the Black Madonna. Just as we worship Kali, they worship the Black Madonna.

As the legend goes, many centuries ago, there was a Catholic monk, a sadhu, who lived there. He used to worship a wood statue of the Madonna. Then the crusades began and the moors came and started destroying all religious places. At that time, that sadhu hid the statue of the Madonna in the crevices of a cave nearby in which he used to live. Every day, he would light a fire, which is customary for sadhus living in caves and isolated places. With the increase of smoke and carbon in the cave, in the course of time, that wooden image of the Madonna became black. Of course, that sadhu died, but centuries later, when the invaders had receded and the Christian faith was restored and once again became dominant, the blackened image was found in the crevices of the cave.

The image had become black with the smoke of the charcoal and came to be known as the Black Madonna.

It is enshrined on top of the hill called Monserrat. 'Black Madonna' can be easily translated into Sanskrit as Kali Mata, no problem. You don't have to separate the concept of Black Madonna from Kali Mata, as they represent the same archetype. Today, there is a very big chapel there. At midday, they ring a gigantic bell and thousands who have travelled from far and wide gather for the midday Mass. Monserrat is about sixty miles away from Barcelona.

I was talking about the relevance of caves for yoga and spiritual sadhana. Not only in yoga, but even in the chronicles of Christian mythology and tradition, caves have had a great significance in the lives of many Christian saints. So, don't talk much about oxygen. When you practise kriya yoga, the energy is very high. Are you going to balance it through oxygen or through carbon? If you cannot sleep at night due to hyper-ventilation of the brain, will you need more oxygen or carbon to induce sleep? So, don't talk to me about carbon emissions and greenhouse gases being harmful. The theories being propagated about greenhouse gases are full of politics and commerce. It is not pure science. Of course, everything has to be within limits and just as too much carbon can have a negative effect, so can too much oxygen.

Swami Satyananda's birth

This is the first birthday I am celebrating because I believe that man is born only once. The astronomical position in 1923, the year I was born in, was the same as it is today, 24 December 2008. I was born on 24 December 1923, at four minutes past midnight. Four minutes past twelve is actually the 25th December, but according to the *jyotish shastra* or Indian astrology, which is based on the movement of the moon, it was the 24th.

Today is the morning of the 25th and the full moon already commenced at 12.04 am, when you were fast asleep. This is known as *Aghan Poornima*, the full moon that occurs in the month of Aghan, which is also known as Marga Sheersha. At 12.04 am, the exact time of my birth, the Poornima had

already passed a few steps ahead, and this position of the moon is known as *Pratipada*. The next day is the first day of the dark fortnight of the month of Paush. According to Western astrology, the sun is passing through Capricorn at this time.

Of course, many of you are Christians, so don't mind it when I say that sometimes I doubt if Christ was a Capricorn. Was he really born in December? By all the literature that I have read and all that I can conceive of, he was born in September and was a Virgo. Often, when I think about it, I find it a bit confusing because history says one thing and the traditions say something else. But we are born in a century where we can think independently.

I can have my independent thinking, which can be different from yours. When I begin to think, I begin to doubt. When I begin to think about it, I begin to ponder: was he really born in December or was he born in September? Was he a Virgo or was he a Capricorn? The two astrological signs depict two totally different natures. The astrologers can tell you better than I can. Maybe you already know it, as many of you here may be astrologers. Capricorns have a definite nature, don't they? Virgos have their own nature. The symbol of Virgo is *kanya*, the virgin. Christ's mother was also a virgin. This is a very good coincidence. From a virgin mother a virgin child is born. If you ponder over it and think with an independent mind, not coloured by history, tradition or religion, then you will know that the nature of a person born in the *Kanya rashi*, Virgo, and the nature of Christ are perfectly matched.

So, 12.04 am was the time of my birth in the month of Aghan in 1923, and the same astrological conjunctions occur in my life today, after eighty-five years. The same astronomical situations are there which were there in 1923 when I was born. And why was this birthday declared by me? Well, I will tell you a story. When I was in Munger, some people began to say that I was born on 26 July 1923. They did not just think or say this; it was also printed in many books. 26 July! No, no, because I am not a Leo. I am not full of vanity or proud like a lion. Moreover, lions eat only one thing, but I can eat

anything. I can eat idli, dosa, sambhar, chutney, puri-aloo, so how can I be a lion? No, I am not vain like a Leo; I am one-pointed like a Capricorn. I think of only one thing, not two things.

I told Swami Niranjan that it is necessary to make the real date of my birth known, before the wrong date becomes a part of tradition and history, and maybe a part of the church also, who knows! Of course, Hindus do not say 'church', they call it *sampradaya*. So, in the course of time, the sampradaya may record that Swami Satyananda was born on 26 July, and all of you will be saying, "Swamiji was a Leo."

Now, the date of my birth has been corrected. The time and date of birth is very important, because we are human beings. God has created human beings with a purpose. We are not accidents. Human birth is not an accident. It has a purpose. What is the purpose of human life? What is the purpose of this human body? What is the purpose of human incarnation?

First of all, you must know that every human being, born in a particular time and space, is an object. You are born at a particular time, you are born in a particular space, and you are an object. Time, space and object are the three categories of nature, they are the three categories of mind, and they are the three categories of the entire science. Time and space are the two realities inherent in every substance, every object, every matter, including your body and mine. Without time and space, there would not be the creation of any object. For an object to exist, it requires a time-space continuum. Time and space are the two arms of nature present in all creation and they always travel opposite to and against each other.

Actually, there are two movements of time and space. They either move away from or towards each other. When they move towards each other, that is called yoga. When they move against each other, that is called bhoga. When time and space move towards each other and meet at a particular point, an explosion takes place. Your birth is the result of an

explosion in time and space. Of course, you are born through the physical union of your mother and father, but is that the only process at work in the birth of a human being? Not at all. This body, which, apart from flesh, blood and bones, is composed of the *pancha tattwas* or five elements, operates on a highly refined energy system and houses the atma or soul, and is created by multifaceted processes that are cosmic in nature.

The same explosion between time and space takes place in your mind too, when you are successful in *dhyana* or meditation, and the movement of time and space is reversed and made to converge at the nucleus. As a matter of fact, the same explosion takes place in nuclear science as well. Scientists developed it when they realized that the atom is not indivisible and exploded it to discover atomic and nuclear energy. Those who are aware of nuclear science may know about the process of fusion, when time and space are brought together. In fact, one of the biggest experiments of this kind is being done in Switzerland, where over twenty-five countries have sent their best scientists to develop an artificial condition where the movement of time and space can be reversed and they are made to travel towards each other at terrific speed. Science replicating Nature or rather, trying to replicate Nature, as their first attempt failed. The process created such intense heat that they had to abort the experiment to avoid a mishap, which could even have meant annihilation of the Earth!

Human birth is important. Why is it important? You cannot see God. You can only talk about Him. Go on talking. He is omnipresent, He is omniscient, He is omnipotent. But that will not give you the experience of God, because just by talking about Him you cannot see Him. You cannot experience Him. It is not possible to conceptualize an eternal, infinite object with a finite mind. It is not possible for your finite mind to conceptualize an infinite and eternal thing. The body is finite and you are finite. You are mortal. You are limited by time and space. How can you conceptualize Him? How can you experience Him?

It is definitely possible to experience the cosmic being in yourself. Therefore, God has created you, so that you may find Him within your heart, deep within yourself, beyond the body consciousness, beyond the mental consciousness, beyond the intellectual consciousness. Beyond all forms of consciousness of which you become conscious, there is a consciousness which is called Brahman, Paramatma, or the Absolute, which is hidden in you. The totality of humanity can be experienced in this physical body, which is here, and that is precisely the purpose of human birth. *That is why I was born on this day, on a certain date and at a certain time.*

Now it is up to you how you celebrate your birthday. To celebrate your birthday, you have to remember one thing: you are born as a human being not just for the purpose of living the life of a human being but in order to realize the depth of consciousness, the height of consciousness, that magnanimity of your soul within yourself. You have something in you and you have to realize that. That is why the Vedas proclaim, *Tat Tvam Asi* – “You are That”, about which we have been talking, that God, that eternal God. You are that God. The God of whom the Vedas talk, the God of the Bible, the God of the Koran, the God about whom people have been talking since eternity, that God, that reality, that cosmic reality – you are That.

Only as a human being can you conceive of that consciousness. No other incarnation can conceive of that. Not that there is nothing in them. A dog also has the seed of eternal truth in it. A donkey, a cobra, a monkey and even a rock has a spark of that divine truth we call God. The truth, eternity, God, is inherent in everything, but they cannot realize it. You can realize it. A dog cannot realize it, a donkey cannot realize it, a tree cannot realize it, the oceans cannot realize it, the mountains cannot realize it, the lakes cannot realize it. You can realize it because you have become aware.

It is not only Swami Satyananda who says that there is God in you. The Bible also says, “I and my Father are One.” In the Bible, they first speak of “Our Father who is in Heaven.” That is similar to the theory of Vishishtadvaita or the

qualified monism of Vedanta. Then they say, “I and my Father are One.” That is also a dictum of Vedanta, *Aham Brahmasmi*. So, it is not me who says it, but the people who have had that experience have reiterated it time and again in all the sacred texts. And what was the experience they had? “I am not this body, I am not this mind, I am not the senses, I am not this mortal object; Immortal Self am I.” While I am talking of my birthday, I am also telling you to celebrate your birthday with this in mind. The purpose of your birth cannot be enjoyment or bhoga.



I will give you a small example. When you go from here to Kolkata, what is your aim or destination? It is to reach Kolkata. But on the way, you take tea, breakfast and sometimes you smoke as well. You may also sing in the train, talk to your co-passengers, make new friends, enjoy the scenery, but that is not the purpose for which you are on the train. No, your purpose for being on the train is to reach your destination. In the same way, your purpose for being in this world is to discover yourself, discover who you are. Of course, you can enjoy your journey of life, have children, have lots of money, a good house and all kinds of luxuries that science, society and company can provide you with. Enjoy them, I am not against that. But that is not the purpose for which you are born.

I am not against having good clothes, cosmetics, looking nice, having a boyfriend or a girlfriend. No, I am not going to tell you that you must not enjoy all that. Have it if you want to, but that is not the purpose for which you have been ordained. That is not the purpose for which you have been

given this precious human life. He has given you a body, a very precious human body, and it is a perfect design of God. Sometimes, God makes better designs like Ramakrishna Paramahansa and others!

God has designed human beings out of His kindness. After creating humans, He must have thought, "How can I become known to this human being?" He must have said, "Yes I am, and I want to reveal Myself to you." Please listen to me very carefully. God is saying, "I want to reveal Myself to this chap. But this chap is not looking at Me. He is only looking at his wealth or girlfriend or comfort and enjoyment."

It is like there is a ghost, a spirit, in my room who wants me to talk to him, but my mind is on a different wavelength and that spirit is in a different incarnation. He can see me, he can see Swami Satyananda seated. And he says, "Swami Satyananda, wake up." But Swami Satyananda does not listen to him. He just cannot listen to him because he operates on a different wavelength. Similarly, God says, "I want to reveal Myself to these guys." He tries in many ways, but He does not get any reply because you are not tuned in to Him. To hear what He is saying, you require tuning.

He has been working this way patiently since eternity, until somebody like a Christ or Ramakrishna or Vasishta or Vishwamitra, hear Him. Christ exclaimed, "O Father who is in Heaven" when he realized God. Ramakrishna realized God in Ma Kali. He used to speak to the goddess and she used to reply to him. There are many others who have had this experience. They came to know that it is possible to realize God. It is possible that one can listen to Him. When they started conversing with God, He must have given them the duty to tell others, to convince others as well. God said, "Look here, Ramakrishna, you please tell these guys so I can talk to them." That is why He sent Christ as a messenger. He said, "Christ, Ishu, you please go and tell all these *bandhus*, brethren."

Christ was a messenger of God, but the poor man was crucified like an ordinary criminal. He was born in Israel. Had he been born here, he would not have met that fate because

in India we don't crucify saints. We will wash their feet, we will put sandalwood paste on them, and if necessary, we will give them a lot of dollars and euros for their mission. The sannyasins, the saints are sponsored and patronized here. Am I wrong? We are sponsored, we are patronized, we are worshipped. They won't crucify me, mind you. Even if I say, "Shaivism, Vaishnavism, Shaktism is all nonsense", they won't crucify me. No, they will still worship me.

God sent Christ as a messenger. In India, we call him a messiah. When God spoke to Christ, Ishu, He must have told him, "Now that we are able to talk, I will tell you the way to experience Me and you should act as My messenger on Earth." God has spoken to many people. They say He spoke to Mohammed Hazarat. Devi spoke to Ramakrishna. You know the story of Ramakrishna Paramahansa? Devi, Kali Mata spoke to him. The point is this, God is so kind that He wants to reveal Himself to you, but you have to tune yourself. God wants to talk to you. God is very keen to reveal Himself to you because He is also very lonely, He is all alone. He wants to have a talk with you. In the Upanishad it is written, *Ekoham* – "I am One"; *Bahusyam* – "Let me be many."

If that is a truth, then my birthday is very important. It reminds me today that, eighty-five years ago, God created me, so that I may talk to Him, so that He may reveal Himself to me. I was born, My mother kissed me, gave me milk, loved me so much that if I said, "Mummy, I want to talk to God, I want to talk to God", she would be very afraid. She would say, "My God, after so many years of marriage I've got a son, and he too is running after God. I will lose him."

I came to earth for Him and if I run after Him, I am only going back to Him who sent me here in the first place. God is our ultimate home. God is our ultimate abode from where we came and where we go, and my mother is so afraid and terrified that her little boy will leave her for God. She should be happy that I am so wise, but instead she is ridden with fear, because children are toys for their mothers. They ignore the reality or the purpose of birth. They just get caught in

moha, delusion, and *asakti*, attachment. They tremble with fear when they think that their child will not marry, but will go away, shave his head and become a sannyasin. So, they do a big cover-up, they keep him in delusion as long as they can. That is what they did to Buddha.

You know the story of Buddha? If not, please read it. Buddha was born under such celestial conjunctions that the astrologers had predicted his rise to enlightenment. Therefore, his parents kept him in utmost luxury and comfort, away from the realities of life such as death and disease. They made beautiful palaces for him where he lived in the intoxication of material life, wine, women, song and dance twenty-four hours. He was married to a beautiful princess, Yashodhara. But ultimately, Buddha walked out and went in search of God. No one could stop him, even the newly-born son that had just arrived. He went away. You know the whole story.

That is what most of us are doing. The purpose of human life is not to run after luxury, fleeting beauty and fleeting objects. They will be granted to you, they will come to you, yes, you will have them. But the ultimate destination is not the peanuts, tea, cigarette, gossip or newspaper that you indulge in on the train. No, that is not your destination. That is just passing time. The ultimate purpose is reaching the destination you set out for.

The ultimate purpose of life is realizing your own self. You are not the body. Swami Sivananda said, “You are not the mind, you are not the indriyas, you are not the pancha tattwas, you are not the three prakritis, you are beyond all that, you have to transcend duality.” How can one transcend this duality that is experienced day in and day out? First of all, have a guru, then have a mantra. Now go on practising it. A B C D, A B C D . . . First, the alphabet, then words, then sentences, paragraphs, essays, the whole subject. How do you learn a language, how do you learn mathematics, how do you learn things? You have to develop in spiritual life in the same way – step by step, starting with the mantra of a guru, which is the kindergarten of spiritual life. And don’t be in a hurry.

It may take a year or two, or five or twenty, or thirty or forty or fifty. It is possible that you may not even get it in this lifetime, but the next time you can start again, because God has given infinite lives. Just as your education system has given infinite classes. Take this level, then that level, and then graduation, post-graduation, research. In the same way, God has also given you many lives. Do not doubt that. I tell you not from my knowledge, but from my experience. There is life beyond this life; this is not the only life. This is not the first time I am born, and this will not be the last. I will be born again and you will be born again. That is the truth. Karma is real. Life is real. There is a continuity of time, there is a continuity of space, there is a continuity in object. Why should there not be a continuity of life?

It is simple logic. Time is continuous, space is continuous, object is continuous, so why should I not be continuous? Why should I stop at the point of my death? Death is only a fullstop. It is not the end of my book. It may be the end of the chapter, but not the end of the book. You will get many chances. Start with guru and guru mantra, and don't fall into the trap of wrong thinking, "I want a perfect guru." Damn it, perfect guru! What are you talking about?

A school boy, a little child who is just in playschool says, "I want a PhD." To that little boy in playschool who wants a PhD, I say, "My dear son, you don't need a PhD. You just need someone who can give you the basic alphabet. You are not ready for a PhD." It is the same in spiritual life. Many times people tell me, "Swamiji, where will I get a perfect guru?" Where will you get one? First, you become perfect. Then you will get a perfect guru. You are in playschool and you want a highly qualified person to teach you. No, no, that will not happen. Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Buddha or Christ will not come to teach you. You get anybody. I can become your guru, no problem. Of course, since 1988 I have given up that job. I am retired, so I cannot help you.

Satsang

18 February 2009



What is the difference between a karma sannyasin and a poorna sannyasin?

A karma sannyasin is one who gradually practises spiritual life while living a normal life as a husband, wife, son, daughter, sister, brother, friend, employer or worker, doing a business, a job or living at home. A sannyasin is one who renounces society and all relationships to live on his own, dedicating his or her life to the evolution of the inner awareness. Whatever a sannyasin does, should be done only for that purpose.

That is the basic difference between a karma sannyasin and a poorna sannyasin.

In fact, this concept exists even in Christianity. In the Christian tradition, it is the monks and nuns who represent poorna sannyasa. A common man who is baptized as a Christian is a karma sannyasin. You are not born a Christian; you are born as a simple human being. But when you feel you want to lead a spiritual or religious life, then you seek baptism. When you are baptized, you become a Christian. Now you practise your *mala*, or rosary, read the Bible or attend Mass.

A monk or a nun has to take vows. This is similar to poorna sannyasa. However, a poorna sannyasin is one who lives for the evolution of his awareness. He is not a reformer, even though reforms may take place through him. He is not a crusader, although he upholds a spiritual tradition. Sometimes, on account of political influences, there is a lot of degeneration in different religious traditions and the dharma of a monk suffers or takes a beating. Instead of concentrating on their own spiritual lives, they become crusaders.

So, even the monks are of two types. Those who only follow the path set by spiritual giants of the Christian tradition such as St Francis of Assisi or St Xavier. They lived in isolation and practised austerities as well as concentration and meditation. The life of a sadhaka or practitioner is a very simple life. Those who practise such a monastic life are poorna sannyasins. The monks who go from place to place, preaching, reforming and propagating Christianity sometimes deviate from monastic life due to their frequent interaction with society. Instead of self-awareness or self-evolution, their goal becomes propagation of a religion. This degeneration is perceptible not just in Christianity. Even among the followers of vedic dharma, sannyasins, instead of living a spiritual life in contemplation, seclusion, solitude, celibacy, simplicity, austerity, become teachers and gurus. Degeneration takes place here as well.

One has to maintain the sannyasa discipline even when functioning in the world. That is the sign or dharma of a

poorna sannyasin. I have done it. Even when I was teaching yoga and travelling around the world, I was a poorna sannyasin. Now, when I am not teaching yoga and have retired completely from activities, leading a solitary life in silence, simplicity and meditation, I am a poorna sannyasin. In both ways, I have been a poorna sannyasin. Then I was an active poorna sannyasin and now I am an inactivate poorna sannyasin.

In the same way, when you, as a householder, take initiation of karma sannyasa from a guru, you still have your social commitments. You also have your psychological commitments, and you have your whims and fancies, depressions and ecstasies of life. You are actively involved and steeped in karma and it has an impact on you. This is inevitable, for karma is the law that determines cause and effect. How you deal with the impact or effect of karma decides whether you are a karma sannyasin.

This is the most important factor for a karma sannyasin to understand. Karma sannyasins do not have to renounce karma. He or she need not or rather, should not, overlook the compulsions of life. What are the compulsions of life for a householder? Passion, greed, jealousy, attraction, repulsion, like and dislike. You cannot avoid them and you should not avoid them. If you avoid them, they will manifest as physical sickness, mental aberration or as an error in the personality due to faulty perception.

A karma sannyasin is not expected to avoid these compulsions of life, which are created by nature. But then, there is an impact. Greed has an impact, passion has an impact, jealousy has an impact. Karma sannyasa takes care of that impact. If you are able to take care of the impact of the laws of nature, then you are a karma sannyasin.

Your question is the same as Arjuna put to Sri Krishna almost two thousand five hundred years ago. How can one evolve and grow spiritually while living in the world and enacting karma? As a sincere householder, you may want to grow in spiritual life. But then, you face insurmountable

problems which divert you from the fulfilment of your spiritual pursuits. What are the problems that you face all the time? Obligation is not a problem. Duty is not a problem. Job is not a problem, nor is husband, wife or children. What then is the problem you face in life?

It is not the karma or action that causes problems, but the impact of that karma or action which leaves a side effect on you that is the problem. A loved one dies, this leaves an incurable impact on you. You lose your job, the impact is tremendous and you are ridden with anxiety and worry. There are millions of such situations you face which leave their impact. How are you going to manage the impact that your karmas throw on you? That is what a karma sannyasin has to think about. He or she has to learn how to develop immunity to the impact of karmas.

It is different for a poorna sannyasin, for he renounces karma. He just lives, having no obligations or duties, and is not really answerable to anyone. His only obligation is to develop the inner awareness. For that, he may live in an ashram, as a wandering mendicant or in seclusion, as his guru ordains. Poorna sannyasa is the narrow path of *nivritti*, or non-involvement, intended only for the chosen few who can live life as a medium of the divine. Karma sannyasa is the broad path of *pravritti*, or active involvement, in life intended for the majority, so they too can work towards their evolution.

The *Bhagavad Gita* is the textbook that must be read to understand the two paths of pravritti and nivritti designed for man. Through eighteen chapters, it systematically takes you through the blueprint of life, telling you how to rise above ordinary life and live like a karma sannyasin in much the same way as a beautiful lotus flower. The lotus is born in mud, lives in mud and withers away in mud, but it always appears untainted and beautiful, giving joy to one and all. Poorna sannyasa is the ideal, a progression in one's life when one reaches a certain stage of evolution where the impact of karmas do not have a strong grip on the mind and the



individual has been successful in freeing himself from the clutches of *raga* and *dvesha*, like and dislike.

It is *raga* and *dvesha* which keep a man swinging like a pendulum from happiness and joy to unhappiness and suffering. It is the birth of *vairagya* in an individual that gives him deeper insight and the ability to withstand the impact of *karma*. So, *karma sannyasa* is a way of living in the world with a different attitude, and *poorna sannyasa* is a way to live life as an expression of the divine will.

Yesterday, Swami Satsangi told us that the events of life which seem so painful, so difficult, are in fact to be confronted and lived with optimism.

Life is a mixture of events. When I say mixture, it means both good experiences and bad experiences, both the desirable and the non-desirable. You only want love. You cannot accept hatred. But life is a mixture of both love and hatred. When a child is born, you are happy and when somebody dies, you

are sorry. But life is a mixture of both life and death. You like to be my friend. You don't like to be my enemy. You don't like a mixture. That is the problem with every human being and that is why you are unhappy. Unhappiness is experienced because you do not want to accept the reality of nature, the reality of life and eternity. God did not only create light. He also created darkness. Whether you believe in God or not does not matter when there is a creator. You may not say God; you may say nature or accident. It does not matter. Accidents created love and nature. Accidents created love and hatred, not God. When accidents created both love and hatred, you have to accept them both. When money comes, you are happy. When money goes, you are sorry. This is the attitude, the approach that you have to change if you want to experience happiness.

Swamiji, yoga schools have been accepted as an important channel of bringing peace to the world, and we are often asked to talk about establishing peace. So, again we wonder how to establish peace in the world where there is such a mixture of war and strife?

War and peace are interrelated terms. You cannot think of war without thinking of peace. There is no existence of peace if there is no war. The end of war is peace. The reason for peace is war. So, war and peace are interrelated, like birth and death. If you are not born, you will not die. And if you don't die, you will not be born. A tree dies, another tree is born. Therefore, the question of war and peace is an eternal question.

The answer which you are thinking of is only for peace and not for war. Why do you only want peace, why don't you want war? Everybody wants peace. Nobody wants war. Isn't it funny? It is impossible! You should think of war, because war is the cause for the death of a civilization. If there is no war, civilizations will not die. There was a time when the vedic civilization, the Chinese civilization, the Islamic civilization existed. They are all finished. How did they finish? War, war and war!

Now, if we who exist in this world today do not die, what will happen? Just imagine. You do not die and new children are born. You do not die. I do not die. What will happen, just imagine! The world will become an intolerable place. Therefore, death is necessary. War is necessary. So, let us talk about war and let us talk about peace. In yoga, there is both. In yoga, there is destruction of ajnana and birth of jnana. In yoga, something dies and something else is born.

Europeans do not like wars because they have faced two great wars in the last century. Therefore, they have created a European Union, so that Germany will not fight with France, France will not fight with England, England will not fight with Belgium. They will be one. But you should remember that it is only because of war that Europe prospered. Everything that you find in Europe today, whether in the field of science, technology, education, medicine, governance, parliament or communication, is because of the two great wars that Europe fought in the last century. Therefore, don't fear wars. Everyone is afraid of war, but they don't realize that all the accomplishments in the world have taken place only on account of war.

People say that the economy will regress and growth and development will halt if there is a war. Do they not say that? This dictum itself is wrong. It is the dictum of cowards. We have been misguided, the *Bhagavad Gita* says that if you die in war you will attain glory in the other realms, and if you win in war you will attain glory in this realm (2:37):

*Hato vaa praapsyasi svargam jitvaa vaa bhokshyase maheem;
Tasmaaduttishtha Kaunteya yuddhaaya kritanishchaya.*

Slain, you will obtain heaven; victorious, you will enjoy the earth;

Therefore, stand up, O son of Kunti, resolved to fight.

It is not at all possible to avoid death, war and destruction, because death and destruction is a law of *prakriti*, the cosmic nature. Death is a cosmic law made by the creator. Disease is

also a cosmic law, and so is darkness. Just as God has created light, He has created darkness too. Just as He has given birth, He has also engineered death. Just as He has created happiness, He has also created the notion of unhappiness. You did not give birth to the notion of joy and suffering. They are eternal concepts that each individual is subjected to and has to undergo because they are cosmic concepts born out of the creator.

You only want happiness. You don't want the other side of happiness, which is also God's creation, unhappiness. You only want birth and no death. That is a wrong idea. It is only on account of suffering that you can understand the importance of joy. It is only on account of the devastation of war that you can understand the necessity of peace. After all, who will crave for peace if there is no war? The necessity of peace becomes relevant only on account of war. The necessity of war is to enforce peace and bring about a change. Where is the question of experiencing peace if one does not experience the onslaught of war? If a man does not die, then how can he be born? This is a firm and conclusive dictum of the cosmic laws that govern the universe. But when man forgets or ignores these basic well-defined dictums, he suffers and faces difficulty. Otherwise, there is no cause for suffering in this world. Death and disease are not the cause of suffering. It is their impact on your mind that is the cause of your suffering.

If you start a business and it fails, you may face some difficulty, but you will not suffer if the failure does not have an effect or impact on your mind. If your mind is not affected by failure, then it is always easy to recover quickly and start again. It is such people who are happy in life. Abraham Lincoln stood for the presidency eleven or twelve times before he succeeded. He did not suffer from the impact of rejection. Therefore, one day he did succeed. Each failure made him stronger in his resolve.

If your old grandmother, who is bedridden, dies, it hardly makes any alteration in your life, but still you suffer mentally because her death leaves an impact, a mark on your mind. If

there is no reaction to her death because you understand that it is a natural event which is inevitable and also beneficial for her, as her life was just restricted to the bed and at the mercy of others, then it will not leave an impact.

If you are free from the impact, you begin to flow with the current of life, because you begin to understand that what is destined and inevitable by the cosmic laws of the creator, has to happen and will happen, for they are events beyond your control. They are events that take place due to determined laws that govern the universe just as a judge operates within the ambit of judicial laws. Even though he may send criminals to the gallows, he remains unaffected because it is the law that decides the verdict, not him. Or a doctor who may see many patients die each day, remains unaffected, because he is aware of the laws that govern the body and that he cannot do anything if the time for the patient's death is close at hand.

In the same way, war, death and destruction are predetermined. They will happen. But you have to remain mentally unaffected by them. This is the central teaching of Sri Krishna to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita*. One of the greatest treatises on life was taught on the battlefield, amidst missiles flying in every direction. Krishna did not teach Arjuna the art of living in a serene, peaceful place, a temple or an ashram. He gave the sermon and explained all the dictums when they were on the verge of one of the greatest wars in human history, the Mahabharata.

Two splendid armies were standing face to face, the war conches had been blown and Arjuna had a nervous breakdown. Mind you, Arjuna was not a coward. He was one of the most accomplished warriors ever to have been born on earth. His nervousness arose not out of fear, but out of ignorance and delusion. The opposite army standing in front of him consisted of all his kith and kin: uncles, grandfathers, brothers, friends with whom he had played during his childhood. A false compassion arose in him and he was deluded. After all, it was these very uncles and brothers and elders who had meted out injustice and committed gross acts

of adharmā towards Arjuna, his brothers, wife and mother. It was Arjuna himself who had sworn a pledge to wage war on them and yet, when the time came for war, he had cold feet.

Of course, in today's system of war, this will never happen because everything is done by remote now. Even the person who is pressing the button does not realize the consequences of his action. If he could comprehend or perceive the scene of hundreds and thousands being annihilated merely by his pressing the button, he too would have cold feet like Arjuna. If he could imagine or visualize the hundreds and thousands of children who may become maimed, die or be orphaned, the hundreds and thousands of wives who would become widows, the old parents who would be left without anyone to take care of them, he too would have a nervous breakdown like Arjuna.

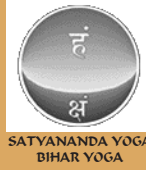
The question arose in Arjuna's mind because the whole scene of uncles and cousins and grandparents and friends with whom he had played, was before him. He began to see it all: the weeping widows, the pining and suffering children and old parents. That made him question the rationalizations for this war and his mind began to doubt. However, even his questioning mind was not fully convinced that war is wrong. Had he been fully convinced, he would not have asked Krishna to clarify to him whether he was right or wrong in going to war. He would have simply walked off the battlefield.

In the very act of asking for Krishna's help in resolving the issue whether war is necessary or not, Arjuna is revealing his divided mind. Then, on the very same battlefield, in full view of all who were poised for war, Sri Krishna took Arjuna aside and explained to him the mysteries of life. Although Arjuna was impressed, he was not fully convinced and would still not pick up his bow and arrows, which he had thrown down from the chariot. Sri Krishna now granted Arjuna the divine vision, and he saw the death and destruction of those he was trying to save. He saw that he was only an instrument and that on account of their misdeeds, their death, at his hands, was already ordained.



Krishna told him, “You are not the doer, so why do you assume doership? It is when you assume doership that you become attached to the consequences of your actions and they leave a strong impact on you. If you perform actions, but are not attached to the consequences and your mind is not affected by them, then it is your sense of dharma, or duty, that guides you and also protects you.”

Now, you may wonder about it – that Krishna who was God-incarnate was motivating Arjuna to fight and kill and go to war. But if you read the *Bhagavad Gita*, you will not at all question this because Krishna deftly explains the blueprint of life, from birth to death. He speaks not only of the dharma of protecting and saving people, but also of the dharma of destroying that which has become unrighteous and evil. If you have a cancer growing in your society, will you not want to destroy it? Or will you sermonize about the necessity of allowing the cancer to grow because removing it could result in the death and destruction of some cells? This is the central teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*.



Sri Swami Satyananda Saraswati came to the remote village of Rikhia (Jharkhand) in 1989 after entering a new phase of spiritual life. Here he performed intense austerities, exemplifying the highest principles of the sannyasa tradition. The fruit of his sadhana was distributed to the local villagers in the form of economic, social and spiritual prosperity. Sri Swamiji established Rikhiapeeth in 2007 with the mandate from his guru Swami Sivananda, to 'Serve, Love, Give'. He entered into mahasamadhi at midnight on 5 December 2009, epitomizing the highest accomplishment of yoga.

Rikhiapeeth Satsangs 2 is a collection of talks given by Sri Swamiji between 2004 and 2009. He speaks on a broad range of subjects, including the changes in Rikhia, his sadhanas, his birthday, yajna, yogic principles, children, kriya yoga, jnana yoga, transcending the mind, the sannyasa tradition, Sri Krishna, Jesus Christ, war and peace, and the future of the world. Sri Swamiji's liberal, compassionate and practical views provide inspiration and fresh insights to all individuals seeking expansion of mind.



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